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Malone Adds H. 80.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
SCOTTISH STAGE.

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
S C O T T I S H S T A G E,
FROM ITS FIRST ESTABLISHMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME;
WITH
A DISTINCT NARRATIVE OF SOME RECENT
THEATRICAL TRANSACTIONS.

THE WHOLE
NECESSARILY INTERSPERSED
WITH
M E M O I R S O F H I S O W N L I F E,

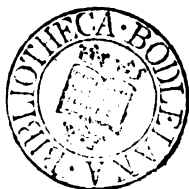
By JOHN JACKSON,
TEN YEARS MANAGER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL OF EDINBURGH.

" Quid Sophocles, et Theſpis, et Æſchylus utile ferrent."
HOR. EP. L. 2.

'Twas late or ere our Bards adorn'd the Stage,
When Thomſon, Home, and Ramſay fill'd the page.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR PETER HILL,
AND G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

1793.



TO
THE PUBLIC
OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
THIS BOOK

IS MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR MUCH OBLIGED,

MOST GRATEFUL,

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

J. JACKSON.

Edinburgh, March 1793.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
SCOTTISH STAGE.

SECT. I.

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Duke of York's company at Holyrood-house—
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lor's hall—Mrs Ward there—Canongate thea-
tre built—First stone laid by Mr Lacy Ryan
—His character.*

IT was not my original intention in this treatise, to have entered into a minute investigation of the rise and progress of the stage at large; or even to have particularised its origin

A

and

and advancement in Scotland, to which part of the island the purport of the following pages shall as closely be confined as the nature of the subject will admit.

THOSE who wish to be acquainted with the minutæ of the growth and culture of the drama in South Britain, may find ample gratification in the perusal of Colley Cibber's *Apology for his Life* : And a review of Mr Arnot's *History of Edinburgh* will greatly add to their general knowledge of the subject.

THIS publication having been rather designed as a narrative of my own personal transactions, no farther researches were intended to have been made into occurrences anterior to my *debut* on the Edinburgh theatre, but such as extended their consequences to, or had operated within the limits of my management.

BUT when I began to explore the tenure by which the theatrical property was, and is at present held, I found it necessary to repair to its source, that I might thereby find an opportunity of tracing the stream of right, flowing clear and unfulfilled from the fountain head.

As

As a member of the theatrical community, and as an early admirer of the profession, I cannot but lament the very unpleasing estimation in which it has been invariably held.—The disgrace is obvious, and there is no disguising it—And however individuals, thro' adventitious circumstances, may have outsoared the contempt, the general odium remained in force, and, with some slight relaxations, still continues to exist.

LET the public, who have affixed the stigma, declare the cause. Partial as I may be deemed upon the subject, I shall not from myself even hazard a surmise.

“ WHERE could be the disgrace,” says Cibber, “ of entering into a society, whose institution, when not abused, is a delightful school of morality? and where to excel requires as ample endowments of nature, as any one profession, that of holy institution excepted, whatsoever *?”

IN the early ages of Christianity, theatrical representations had their origin from religious

A 2

tenets.

* *Cibber's Apology*,

tenets. "The subjects were scriptural, the clergy the composers, the church was the stage, and Sunday the time of exhibition *."

THE cities of Chester and Coventry were remarkable for their dramatic exhibitions. The historic occurrences of the former, I have had occasion minutely to investigate. There they had their Whitson Plays, so called from their being performed in Whitson Week; which were acted in the open air, or under cover, as occasions, I presume, and circumstances best suited.

IN 1529, in the street at the high cross, was represented the play of *Robert Kyng of Cycyle*, or *Robert le Diable*, taken from a French morality of that title †.

A PIECE,

* *Arnot's History of Edinburgh*, p. 74.

† Here is of Kyng Robert of Cicyle,
How pride dide hime beguile.

Robert, for his haughtiness and pride, drew upon himself the wrath of heaven. A sound sleep seizes him in the church. An angel assumes his shape and dress, and takes his place in the palace. Robert awakes, but is unknown, and consequently disowned by his servants.—The angel makes him *the fool of*

A PIECE, called *The Assumption of our Lady*, was performed before Arthur Prince of Wales, the son of Henry the Seventh, at the Abbey Gate; and, in 1600, the annual representations were in the church.

THESE performances were composed from passages in scripture, and thence called Mysteries. They had scriptural titles; such as, *The History of the Deluge—The Birth of Christ—The Death of Lazarus—and, The Last Supper*. In the exhibition, Time, Death, and Sin, were personified, and made capital performers in the *dramatis personæ*.

THEY were written by one Randal*, of the religious

the hall, and orders him to be clothed in that characteristic garb.

The fool Robert also went,
Clothed in lodly* garnement,
With foxes tayles mony aboute,
Men mighte him knowen in the route.

He is then sent out to lie with the dogs; in which situation he cannot but envy the canine race that were permitted to remain in the royal hall. After a long, a rigorous, and ignominious penance, the angel restores King Robert to his royalty. *Warton's Ancient Poetry*, vol. I. p. 184, 188.

* *lothly*, lothsome.

* By Randal Higgenet, monk of Chester, An. 1327, 1328.

religious order of that city, originally in Latin, and afterwards translated by himself into English, by permission of the Pope, to whom he made a personal application for that purpose ; and having been upon the acting list for near three centuries, were modernised for representation in the year 1600. Randal was not the only author of these sacred mysteries exhibited at Chester in 1532. By the proclamation for the Whitsun plays, that year, we are informed, that “ a play, and declaration of divers stories of the bible, beginning with the creation, and fall of Lucifer, and ending with the general judgement of the world, to be declared and played in the Whitsonne weeke, was devised and made by Sir Henry Frances, some tyme moonke there; who gat of Clement, then bishop of Rome, 1000 dayes of pardon, and of the bishop of Chester at that tyme, 40 dayes of pardon, to every person resorting in peacible manner to heare the sayd playes; which were instituted to the honor of God by John Arnway, then mayor of Chester, his brethren, and whole commonalty thereof; to be brought forth, declared, and played, at the cost and charges of the craftes men, and occupations of the sayd citty *.”

THESE

* *Harleian MSS.* 2013.

THESE compositions were not peculiar to Coventry and Chester; we hear of them at Clerkenwell*; and in all probability they are to be met with in the records of many other cities in England. At the beginning of the twelfth century, a religious spectacle, entitled, *A Miracle Play of St Catharine*, was composed by the abbot of St Albans, and acted at Dunstable †.

WE read of them abroad at a very early period. A piece called *Christ's Sufferings*, was written by Gregory of Nazianzen, bishop of Constantinople ‡.

WE learn from Cervantes, that the practice of representing dramatic pieces on the Sabbath day prevailed in Spain in the sixteenth century. The goat-herd, in his narrative to Don Quixot, says, "I forgot to tell you, that Crysoptom, the defunct, was such a great man at composing couplets, that he made carols for Christmas Eve, and *plays for the Lord's Day*, which

* By the parish clerks of London, whence that place was afterwards called Clerkenwell.

† About the year 1110. *Warton's Ancient Poetry*, v. I. p. 371.

‡ *Sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni opera*, v. II. p. 253.

which were represented by the young men in our village; and every body said that they were tip-top *."

SOME of these dramatic pieces were composed intirely from moral subjects; and thence stiled *Moral Plays*, or *Moralities*; humorous passages were at length introduced; and the ludicrous naturally crept into use. Numbers chose rather to laugh than to cry. Thus a kind of motley compositions succeeded; till at last, by degrees, they were formed into regular pieces of five acts, serious or comic, with the introduction of a prologue: and in this shape were they handed down to the present time, under the classical titles of Tragedy and Comedy.

AFTER these dramatic pieces, under the various titles of *Miracle Plays*, *Moralities*, and *Mysteries*, became prevalent and popular in England, it cannot be supposed but they would soon be introduced into this kingdom.

IN my present researches, I have met with
a pub-

* *Don Quixot* by T. Smollet, M. D. v. I. p. 103.

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THE SCOTTISH STAGE. 9

a publication printed in Edinburgh 1633,
which is now before me, entitled,

THE
ENTERTAINMENT
OF THE
HIGH AND MIGHTY MONARCH
CHARLES,
King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland,
Into his ANCIENT and ROYAL CITY of
EDINBURGH,
The Fifteenth of June 1633.*

THIS royal theatrical spectacle exhibited such a variety of scenery, such a characteristic propriety in the different habits, and such apparent order and regularity through the whole, with a splendor I have hardly read of in so early a period, as, I am certain, if re-exhibited, would attract attention and admiration in this more refined age: And I am convinced, that the conductors and the actors concerned in it, must have been conversant in stage representations.

B

MR

* *Vide Appendix, No. I.*

MR ARNOT informs us, that dramatic performances in Scotland were very common in the beginning of the sixteenth century : That after they were excluded from the churches, profane subjects were introduced, and performed in the open air. In a note, he says, " The place where these performances were exhibited was called the Play-Field : Few towns of note were without them : That at Edinburgh was at the Greenside Well ; that of Coupar of Fife was on their Castle Hill *."

THE members of the church, with whose predecessors dramatic performances had originated, and by whom their modes of representation had been adopted, were the first to promote their suppression. They prohibited plays from being written upon divine subjects ; forbade all kinds of performances upon Sundays ; excommunicated all that should attend them ; and, finally, exploded them on every subject, and in every shape †.

IN these theatrical persecutions, the church of Scotland took the lead : and in after times,
when

* *History of Edinburgh*, p. 76. † *Spottiswood's History*, p. 456.

when dramatic entertainments were attempted to be renewed, its opposition to them more forcibly revived.

“THE presbyterian clergy,” says Mr Arnot, “were possessed with the most illiberal and violent animosity against the stage. The writings of their most popular divines represented the Play-house as the actual Temple of the Devil, where he frequently appeared, clothed in a corporeal substance, and possessed the spectators, whom he held as his worshippers *.”

THE magistrates kept pace with the clergy, restricting the comedians from acting within the limits of their jurisdiction. The presbytery, in a solemn deputation, thanked them “for the just zeal they had shewn in the matter.” An *act of exhortation*, against the frequenting of stage-plays, was drawn up by a committee of divines, which was read from all the pulpits in the district †. The condition of an actor in Edinburgh, in those Gothic times, must have been as displeasingly irksome as that of an excommunicated culprit

* Arnot, p. 366.

† Ann. 1727. Arnot, p. 367.

prit beneath the fulminations of the directors of the Inquisition.

THESE over-violent proceedings of the clergy excited a spirit of party among the nobility and gentry, who made a point of supporting their theatrical amusements, by forming parties for the boxes ; and, to preserve the performers from the persecutions with which they were threatened, they procured for them personal protections.

THE actors had scarcely obtained their emancipation from this state of bondage, which they had effected chiefly by the connivance of the law, and the announcing a *concert*, with a *gratis play*, at the head of their bills, when I had the honour of making my *entrée* upon the Edinburgh theatre, then in the Canongate, in the character of *Oroonoko*.

MR LOVE, who was joint lessee with Mr Beatt, was acting manager. I came to him unnoticed, and unknown : I desired a trial, and he instantly, with great politeness, complied with my request. My reception was flattering ; and the next day I was enrolled
among

among the actors for the season, upon the first salary in the company. I had now reached the summit of my wishes, and I blest my fortune for placing me there. Had she run restiff in the onset, and stopped me short in my career, she might perhaps, upon the whole, have been fully as much my friend: for I had resolved, upon the failure of that evening, to have returned contentedly to my home, and applied myself to the line that had been chalked out for me; but,

“ Youth and prosperity had made me vain.”

I am confident, that at that moment I should have preferred the figuring upon the stage in the Mock Majesty of *Macbeth*, to the leading a regiment to the gates of Quebec, under the command of the gallant Wolfe.

I HAD some advantageous offers indeed of preferment, during my first season in Edinburgh; but Mr Garrick's assurance of an engagement in Drury Lane triumphed over all other considerations.

ORONOKO was repeated again and again. Before the second representation, I was honoured

noured with the acquaintance of the late Lord Somerville*, who had been one of the active supporters of the theatre. Being the son of a clergyman, and an officer in the militia of England, I was soon favoured with many introductions of consequence; and, among the rest, I had a general invitation to Drummond Lodge.

PROVOST DRUMMOND had been a most strenuous opposer of all dramatic representations; and nothing but a very singular recommendation could have wrought such a miracle in my favour, as the procuring the patronage of a man so respectable, and so opposite in his principles to the profession in which I was embarked †.

ON a morning's visit to the Lodge, the spot on which Mrs General Scott's house now stands,

* My introduction to that Nobleman was through a chance meeting in the King's Park; but his warm attachment, with which I was afterwards favoured, and which continued till his death, was the result of a letter his Lordship received from the Earl of Fingall, in whose family, in Berks, I had the happiness, upon all occasions, of being kindly received. See Appendix, No. II.

† This was effected by a letter from one of his intimate friends in London. Appendix, No. III.

stands, after some conversation with Mr Drummond, he was told his carriage was at the door. He apologised for his being under the necessity of going to town, and asked me if I would take a seat in his chariot. I thanked him, and accepted of his offer.

WE stopped facing the Exchange, where Lord Somerville happened to be. On our alighting, his Lordship came up to Mr Drummond, and, in his usual blunt mode of address, thus accosted him:—

“WELL done, Provost; do not you think now that you are a pretty fellow?”

“WHAT is the matter, my Lord?”

“WHAT is the matter! Why, I have in my possession a letter from you, in which you declare, that the moment a man sets his foot into a play-house, he sets his foot into hell; and you have just now brought a *Play-actor* in your carriage, and set him down at the cross of Edinburgh.”

HIS

HIS Lordship, without waiting for a reply, turning to me, said, "Come along with me, Sir, and I will shew you this very curious letter."

I ACCOMPANIED Lord Somerville to his apartments in Holyrood-house, where he looked out the epistle, in which I read the *strong passage* before mentioned, with some other expressions equally forcible, condemning his Lordship for the active part he had taken in support of the stage.

HE then informed me, that, in order to protect the performers from the violent measures adopted against them, some of the nobility were under the necessity of nominally announcing them as their menial servants: That a principal one had been received into his house as his butler; where, after performing *King Richard the Third* upon the stage, he disdained not to enact the part of *Scrub*, by drawing a cork at his Lordship's side-table.

I WOULD not have it here supposed, that I have mentioned the above anecdote, to infer from thence, that I was honoured with the
acquain-

towards, or embarking in the funds of a community, whose occupation was struggling under the pressure of such an entailed disgrace.

No man of substance would step forward to promote the erection of a fabric for the representation of profane pieces, excommunicated by the church, and interdicted by law *. Or, could it have been possible to find a master-builder hardy enough, in the face of the church's ban, to have encountered both the risk and the censure, which, by the erecting a building for the purpose of a theatre, he must have laid his account with, I scarcely think a journeyman could have been procured bold enough to have handled a chissel or a hammer in forwarding the *profane work*; not even to have erected a bench,

“ Where giggling girls and powder'd fops might sit,

“ And crowd the house for Satan's benefit †.

Even the accommodation of a roof was looked upon by the wary landlord as too great a hazard, where the owner was assured by his enthusiastic pastors, that the devil would be personified

* An. 10 Geo. II. c. 23.

† *Epilogue to the Minor.*

personified beneath it, and that the whole would vanish away in a flash of fire.

THE belief of a possibility of this kind existed even in London the beginning of the present century, and, at this moment, I do not think it is totally exploded. In one of Rich's celebrated pantomimes, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, I believe the *Sorcerer*, a dance of infernals was to be exhibited. They were represented in dresses of black and red, with fiery eyes and snaky locks, and garnished with every appendage of horror. They were twelve in number. In the middle of their performance, while they were intent upon the figure in which they had been completely practised, an actor of some humour, who had been accommodated with a spare dress for the occasion, appeared among them. He was, if possible, more terrific than the rest; and seemed to the beholders as designed by the conductor for the principal fiend. His fellow-furies took the alarm; they knew he did not belong to them, and they judged him an infernal in earnest; their fears were excited; a general panic succeeded, and the whole group fled different ways; some to their dressing-

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rooms,

rooms, and others through the streets to their own homes, in order to avoid the destruction which they believed was coming upon them, for the profane mockery they had been guilty of. The ODD DEVIL was *non inventus*. He took himself invisibly away, thro' fears of another kind. He was, however, seen by many, in imagination, to fly through the roof of the house, and they fancied themselves almost suffocated with the stench he had left behind.

THE confusion of the audience is scarcely to be conceived. They retired to their families, informing them of this supposed appearance of the devil, with many of his additional frolicks in the exploit. And so thoroughly was its reality believed, that every official explanation that could be made the following day, could not entirely do away the idea. I myself have gone purposely, more than once, before I was convinced of the fact, to see if I could trace the repairs of the end of the house that had been carried away by a waft of the devil's tail.

AN explanation of the above circumstance I had from Mr Rich, in the presence of his friend

friend Bencraft, the contriver, if not the actor, of it, who designed it only as an innocent frolick to confuse the dancers, without advert- ing to the serious consequences that might ensue.

THIS rooted prejudice against the sons of Thespis, as it was stronger in Scotland than in her sister kingdom, so it there more powerfully operated against the propagating of stage exhibitions, and more forcibly retarded the growth of the drama.

IN England, dramatic performances were exhibited in churches on Sundays*, till the end of the sixteenth century: But in Scotland they were anathematized immediately after the Reformation†.

WHEN, upon the restoration of Charles the Second, his brother, the Duke of York, took up his residence in Holyrood-house, a party of performers, from what was called the Duke's Company, by his Highness's command, attended him thither.

IN

* *Warton's Antient Poetry*, Vol. I. p. 141.

† *Book of Universal Kirk*. p. 145, 161.

IN a prologue to the University of Oxford, written by Dryden, he humorously apologizes for the company of performers on that occasion being so thin.

Our brethren have from Thames to Tweed departed, }
 And of our sisters all the kinder hearted, }
 To *Edenborough* gone, or coacht, or carted *. }

FROM this period, through the whole of Queen Anne's reign, till after the troubles in 1715, no theatrical representations were attempted in Scotland.

THE first adventurer we hear of, was Signiora Violante, an Italian, who, with some of her countrymen, returning from Dublin by the way of Port-Patrick, paid a visit to Edinburgh. She exhibited feats of strength, postures, and tumbling, in a room in Carrubber's Close, which was fitted up for the purpose.

THE success she met with on this occasion, encouraged her to collect a company of comedians in England, with which she returned to her former quarters in Edinburgh.

ITINERANT

* *Dryden's Poems*, Vol. III. p. 209. The time of the Duke's visit to Edinburgh.

ITINERANT performers, after this, exhibited in Merchant Taylors Hall, so called from its belonging to the corporation of that name. The prices there were, for the pit and boxes, 2s. 6d. gallery, 1s. 6d. The house would hold at these rates from L.40 to L.45.

FROM the violence of the opposers, and the exertions of the supporters of the stage*, Merchant Taylors Hall was soon perceived to be too small, on particular occasions, to contain the audiences that applied for admission. Opposition generally exalts and renders popular the object it is meant to depress.

SOME performers, with Mrs Ward, a favourite actress, at their head, at length found means to procure subscriptions towards the erection of a regular theatre: And the tradesmen, encouraged by the promise of a partial payment, were induced to proceed upon credit, on an assurance of being paid out of the future profits.

By these means a new theatre was erected
on

* *Arnot's History of Edinburgh*, p. 368.

Ryan on the south side of the Canongate*. The first stone was laid in August 1746, by Mr Lacy Ryan, then belonging to Covent-Garden theatre. I was favoured with his acquaintance. He bore a most respectable character as a man, and was a good actor.

HE had a particularity of voice, from an accident he had formerly received in his mouth †, not pleasing to a stranger. On his first *entrée* in *Cato*, his mode of pronouncing

“ The dawn is overcast, the morning lowers,

“ And heavily in clouds brings on the day—

“ The great, th’ important day, big with the fate

“ Of *Cato* and of *Rome*——”

gave an unfavourable impression to a person unfamiliarised with his tones; but before the end of the play, that peculiarity was forgot.

* The Canongate theatre, at 2s. 6d. 1s. 6d. and 1s. held from L.60 to L.65. At Lancashire’s benefit, I remember there was upwards of L.70; but the wings and stage were so crowded, that, when I came on in the character of *Hotspur*, to encounter the *Prince of Wales*, we had not room to stand at swords length.

† As he was returning from the theatre, after one of his evening’s performance, he was attacked by a street robber, and, making resistance, received two pistol balls in his mouth, which shattered his jaw. After the shot, by the help of a lamp, the villain recognized Mr Ryan, begged his pardon for the mistake, and made off.—He was first noticed in *Marcus* in *Cato*, which was brought out in 1712.

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

Tenures of the theatres in Europe—Revival of stage plays in England—Origin of the patent in Covent Garden—Of the theatrical property in Edinburgh—Mr Lee proprietor and manager—Lords of Session and other gentlemen proprietors—Mr Callender their manager—Mr Digges and Mrs Ward there—Tragedy of Douglas brought out—Mr Love manager—Mr Jackson's appearance in Edinburgh—Mrs Bellamy there.

THE building of the Canongate theatre, though still without the sanction of law, and in defiance of an act of Parliament *, was the first regular theatrical establishment in Scotland. From the original proprietors, therefore, of this house, the rights of property, belonging to the present Theatre Royal, took their rise ; together with the privilege of exhibiting stage representations under the cover of two express acts. The one †, extending

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* 10 Geo. II. c. 28.

† 7 Geo. III. c. 27.

the limits of the liberties of the city, and empowering the King to grant a patent to authorise the acting of plays therein. The other * restraining magistrates from licensing itinerant actors within twenty-four miles of the cities of London, Westminster, and Edinburgh.

THE heritable right, therefore, of the property, with that of the proprietors thereto belonging, of the theatre of Edinburgh, thus fortified and extended, must proceed by lineal descent, or by purchase, to future heritors, without a possibility of a diminution of its powers or appurtenances, unless by the will and consent of the owner or owners thereof.

THE theatres through Europe were originally erected upon the same precarious footing, and are held by a similar tenure. The whole expence attending their building and support, were, with very few exceptions, left to the fortunes and industry of private individuals. These men, therefore, have been every where permitted to manage and conduct

* 28 Geo. III. 1788. See Appendix, No. IV.

duct their own property, like other subjects, under regulations consonant to the police of the respective countries.

THEY were the fabrications of adventurers, and remain in the persons of their successors, their heirs, or assigns.

THE theatres of Paris arose from a religious society, termed, *Confrerie de la Passion*. The brotherhood represented sacred subjects*; and when these pieces came afterwards to give place to modern comedy, the first religious actors retained, notwithstanding, the property and the licence from the crown,

By them the whole was at last conveyed to the company of the *Hotel de Bourgogne*, in consideration of a certain annuity or annual rent. Moliere founded the other Parisian company, and the proprietors of the present theatres of Paris are the lineal successors of those two by

D 2 in-

* ————— Une troupe grossiere.

En public a Paris y monta la premiere,

Et sottement zélé en sa simplicité,

Joua les Saints, la Vierge, et Dieu, par pieté.

Vide Boileau *l'Art Poétique*, Chaul. 3me et les notes.

Voltaire *vie de Moliere*.

Le grand Encyclopedie, voce Comedien.

inheritance, or purchase, without interruption.

UPON the revival of the stage in England, plays were introduced at Court. In the days of Elizabeth, James, and Charles the First, the exhibitions were attended with great expence. The scenery and architecture of Ben Johnson's masques, were designed by Sir Inigo Jones. The actors were the household, and hence derived the title of *His Majesty's Servants* *.

AT the reſtoration, Sir William Davenant, and Sir Harry Kelligrew, undertook to build and decorate a houſe, entirely at *their own expences*, for the entertainment of the public as well as the Court. Therefore it was, that Charles the Second granted a patent to them and their heirs and aſſignees, for ever. This patent is the authority of Covent Garden at this moment.

WHATEVER intereſt the public may have, and the people contend for, in the *election of their clergy*,

* "They had each ten yards of ſcarlet cloth, with a proper quantity of lace, allowed them for liveries; and in their warrants from the Lord Chamberlain, were ſtiled *Gentlemen of the Great Chamber*," *Gibber's Apology*, p. 54.

clergy, yet so sacred is property, that the rights of *patronage* has continued for ages, and still exists in the successors of those who originally endowed the church, or bestowed property upon it. I must apologize for making use of this illustration in speaking upon the present subject; but the justice and aptness of it, it is hoped, will obtain my excuse.

How far I shall be able to keep to the similitude, in the claim that I now make to the right of the theatrical property of Edinburgh, to the powers of its inherent appendages, and to the sanction of the public, let the following progressive narrative decide.

UNDER the firm of its first professional association, the business of the new theatre in the Canongate was carried on till the year 1752. During that period, several performers from London, some of them of established merit, paid occasional visits to Edinburgh. Among these was Mr Lee, who possessed a considerable share of dramatic abilities, and was rising very fast, in his estimation, as an actor. Lee, who had quarrelled with Mr Garrick, was desirous of procuring an establishment in
Scotland,

Scotland, and came down to Edinburgh with that intention.

Lee MANY of the original claimants upon the theatrical property in the Canongate were dead. Mr Lee, who was now become a favourite with the town, found it no very difficult matter to conclude an agreement with the remaining ones, of whom he purchased the house for L. 648, and annuities of L. 100 a-year to the surviving lessees.

LEE being unable to make good his contracts with respect to pecuniary matters, the theatre became the property of some of the Lords of Session *, and other gentlemen, who interposed their interest, and made some money-advancements on the occasion.

THE motive for the interference of these gentlemen was doubtless of a public nature, and that of a laudable kind ; an intention, as they expected, of bringing the then theatre into credit, and of raising it to that degree of respect

* Lord Elibank, Lord Alemoor, Lord Monboddo, Lord Ankerhill, Mr Baron Stewart, Mr Alexander Maxwell, Mr Callender, and others.

respect which their wishes and their ideas had formed.

MR CALLENDER, a merchant in Edinburgh, who was concerned in the undertaking, was invested with the management, for the behoof of himself and the gentlemen concerned.

MR DIGGES, who was then a favourite in Dublin as an actor, and who had been formerly known in Edinburgh in private life, was, with Mrs Ward, engaged at the head of the company.

THE tragedy of Douglas soon after made its appearance *, and was a great temporary relief to the finances of the house. It will for ever be a monument much to the honour of the poetical genius of this country, as well as a lasting credit to the theatre at large.

THE

* December 14. 1756.

The characters were thus originally filled :

Men.

Women.

Douglas, — DIGGES.

Lady Randolph, Mrs WARD.

Lord Randolph, YOUNGER.

Anna, — Mrs HOPKINS.

Glenalvon, — LOVE.

Norval, — HAYMAN.

THE finances, however, even thus under the inspection of one of their own body, did not answer the expectation of the new proprietors. Mr Callender retired with loss, and Messrs Love and Beatt succeeded to the management.

UNDER their theatrical reign, I made my first appearance in Edinburgh *.

BESIDES Mr Love, who was acting manager, there were in the company, that season, Messrs Stamper, Griffith, Parsons, Lancashire, and myself. Mrs Mozeen was the heroine.

THOUGH I had previously resolved to say as little as possible respecting myself, especially where it does not immediately lead towards the illucidation or the promotion of the main business in question, yet as this was an epocha of my life, to which I cannot recur without sensations of various tendencies, I find it impossible to pass over so momentous a period of my existence in total silence.

I WAS ushered before the public with a
prologue,

* Saturday, January 9. 1762.

prologue*, written, and intended to have been spoken, by myself, previous to my appearance in the character of *Douglas*, then my favourite part ; but as it gave place to that of *Oroonoko*, for reasons which the reader will quickly be apprised of, the speaking an address, anterior to that character, was judged both inconvenient and improper ; and the manager being likewise apprehensive of trusting a charge so consequential to one so interested and unexperienced, the egotisms were taken out ; and a change being made from the first to the third person, Mr Love very kindly undertook it himself.

AFTER that of *Oroonoko*, I appeared in the part of *Romeo* ; and afterwards in several other capital characters, in the course of the season, with equal success.

ON breakfasting one morning, as usual, with the manager, with a flattering exordium he assured me, that though he had constantly negatived my request of appearing in *Douglas*, he had been instigated thereto, through a real regard for my interest, as he had constantly

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stantly

* See Appendix, No. V.

stantly looked upon the attempt as a hazardous undertaking : For as no one had ever performed the part before an Edinburgh audience, but Mr Digges, he remained still fresh in their memories ; and his excellence in the character must bear hard upon the most strenuous efforts of a young actor, labouring under prepossessions not easily removed. But, now that I had stood in parts of infinitely more consequence in the dramatic list, and that with a marked and decided approbation of the public, he thought I might *venture upon Douglas*.

HE was sure of my concurrence. The play was therefore given out, and advertised for the next representation.

IN the morning, I had a message from Mr Love, more early than usual. I attended his summons. After some hesitation, I was informed that Mr Digges was arrived in Edinburgh. My reply was, that " I was glad of it, as he would have an opportunity, for the first time, of seeing that favourite character exhibited by another."

Mr

Mr Love. "That is very true, Sir ; and it may yield you some temporary gratification in the performance : But what will be the consequence ? My advice is, that you should defer it, as it will certainly be one of Mr Digges' first performances, and comparisons may be unfavourable.—Shall I order the play-bills to be suppressed ?"

Mr Jackson. (*With great deference.*) "Whatever you think right, I shall certainly concur in."

Mr Love. "I was certain you would see this in the same light with myself. I shall therefore order the bills to be taken down."

HE had the door in his hand, when I thus accosted him :—"Sir, I have not the least objection to your putting a stop to the representation of the play of *Douglas*, if you think it for *your* advantage ; certain I am that it is not for *mine* : and mark the consequence—if I am not permitted to perform *Douglas* to-morrow night, as advertised, I never will appear again, in any other part, upon the Edinburgh stage.

"For I have set my *fame* upon the cast ;

"And I will stand the hazard of the dye."

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Jackson

I REMINDED him, that I had toiled in the vineyard through the whole of the early and dead part of the season, and that now the vintage was arrived, I hoped to pull a ripe bunch, as well as a transient visitor, who came but for a day; and who, the moment the grapes were gathered, would retire, to leave the labour to another *.

MR LOVE, with some signs of embarrassment, apologised, assuring me, that he had suggested nothing but with a sincere attachment to my interest. He candidly confessed, that Mr Digges had made a point with him to defer the play: "But," says he, "as you seem so determined, I shall drop the subject, and the bills shall remain;" at the same time, he expressed himself apprehensive of the consequences, both for himself and me.

MR

* I performed, from the 9th of January to the 30th of April 1752, *Oroonoko*, thrice—*Romeo*, four times—*Earl of Essex*, thrice—*Osizyn*, Mourning Bride, *Don Felix*, Wonder, twice—*Jaffier*, twice—*Douglas*, four times—*Castalio*, twice—*Young Bevil*, *Buckingham*, Henry VIII. *Hamlet*, *Osman*, *Zara*, *Lord Hardy*, *Funeral*, *Tancred*, *Jaques*, *Juba*, *Prospero*—and spoke two prologues, one to the Drummer, or the Haunted House *, the other before the masons play, which was thirty-four appearances, all excepting two, entire new study.

* See Appendix, No. VI.

MR HUME, the author of the play, paid particular attention to the rehearsals ; and it was performed to a crowded audience.

MR DIGGES came early to the house, and placed himself very conspicuously in the centre of the third row of the pit from the orchestra,

AFTER the curtain dropped, Mr Hume repaired to the front of the house, and, among others, assured Mr Digges that he had scarcely ever been so well satisfied with the performance of the part of *Douglas*.

IN a very short time after, the play was repeated, and Mr Digges appeared, for the first time, in the *Old Shepherd*. Another difficulty here started. He insisted upon having his name for *Old Norval* at the head of the bill. I refused to yield to him the post of honour. At last the matter was compromised, and the first line stood thus :

Douglas, Mr JACKSON—*Old Shepherd*, (*First time*) Mr DIGGES.

I PERFORMED afterwards several parts in the same pieces with Mr Digges : *Jaffier* to his

his *Pierre*, *Juba* to his *Cato*; and continued, if not upon terms of the closest intimacy, yet with those of the highest complaisance and apparent cordiality; the above slight contention, on our first acquaintance, having in no wise operated so untowardly as to disturb or impede the succeeding business of the season.

It served, however, in my mind, for which reason it is here inserted, more forcibly to attach my affections to an audience, for this strong and repeated instance of their partiality and kindness, who still continued to shower their favours upon me, on all succeeding occasions, for which I am bound to yield them the fullest tribute of gratitude, and which I shall ever acknowledge with the highest sense of duty and respect.

TOWARDS the close of the season, Mrs Belamy was introduced. Her engagement, according to the advertisement, was for four nights, for which the boxes had been previously taken *. I was retained on the occasion; and

* " The following *four* plays *only* will be performed successively at the theatre in the Canongate:—TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA,

and had the high honour (as I then deemed it) of performing twice with that celebrated actress; *Castalio* with her *Monimia*, and *Romeo* to her *Juliet*.

I REMEMBER her finding fault with my approaching too near her in the balcony scene. I apologised, by observing, that it was impossible to refrain from even scaling the wall, if accessible, when so charming an object was in view. In this I judged I had nature for my guide.

It certainly is much to the interest of a *Juliet*, that the *Romeo* should stand at some distance, and as near the lamps as the form
of

SIGISMUNDA, RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE, JANE SHORE, and the PROVOKED HUSBAND; in which a *Gentlewoman* will appear, for the first time, on the stage in this kingdom, in the character of *Sigismunda*, *Eftifania*, *Alicia*, and *Lady Townly*. Tancred and Sigismunda (the first play) will be performed on Wednesday, the 5th of May, with an occasional prologue, to be spoken by Mr Digges." In the history of her life, Mrs Bellamy says (v. IV. p. 44.) "Eight nights were to be the limited number of my performing, and the last was to be for my benefit;" which, I presume, was the case; for it was her seventh night (Thursday) when I appeared with her in *Romeo*, and on the Saturday, May the 15th, she played *Lady Macbeth*.

of the house would allow ; for by that means the lady is enabled to assume a more graceful position, and to present her figure more fully to the audience. But this is a situation detrimental to her lover ; as it exhibits, at most, his profile to one part of the audience, and his back to the other. I was, however, at that period, too little acquainted with the arcanæ of theatrical business, called, in the cant phrase, *stage trick*, to have practised this as a premeditated manœuvre. I was also possessed of too much gallantry to have taken a wilful advantage of a lady, particularly one so celebrated in her profession, and whom I should have been proud to oblige, even by standing upon my head, had she deigned to make the request. It was, nevertheless, deemed intentional in me at the time ; became the ground-work of a serious complaint against me, and was the cause of my not continuing the next season in Edinburgh ;—a measure which both my inclination and my interest most strongly prompted me to embrace ; and which Mr Garrick, though his theatre was open to me, recommended as the most effectual means to procure me a necessary degree of confidence, and experimental knowledge.

MR

MR DOWSON gave me a very pressing invitation to remain in Edinburgh another year; and made me an offer of an addition of a pound a-week to my salary; but I was prepossessed, that as Mr Digges and Mrs Bellamy were to continue in Scotland that season, my situation would be rendered not very pleasing.

THIS year, 1763, Mr Digges changed his theatrical name; the principal characters, thro' the season, in the play-bills, being announced to be performed by *Mr and Mrs Bellamy*.

MRS BELLAMY's anecdotes, on her jaunt to Scotland, are delineated in the memoirs of that lady, to which the reader is referred.

ON my arrival in London, I procured engagements for Messrs Love and Parsons, with Mr Garrick, at Drury Lane.

THE former, with whom I was connected in the closest ties of friendship, was in private life a most respectable and worthy character. His real name was Dance, the son of Dance the architect to the city of London. He was
F a good

a good sound actor, and confessedly the best *Falstaff* since *Quin*.

Par
MR PARSONS performed the *Miser* that season in Edinburgh. He has ever since sustained a capital line of characters in Drury Lane.

Griffith
MR GRIFFITH acted the fops and fine gentlemen. He was many years afterwards manager of the Norwich company, which he supported with much credit.

MR LANCASHIRE possessed a great fund of dry humour, and filled Shuter's line in low comedy. He was a great favourite with the public. He kept a tavern first in the Canon-gate, and afterwards in the New Town. He drank and joked with his customers; laughed and grew fat; and, at length, died respected by many, and with the good word of all.

SECT.

S E C T. III.

*Anecdotes of the Reverend Mr Jackson, A. B.—
Of Archbishop Blackburne—Election matters
—Anecdotes of the late Earl of Thanet and
Lady Bingley—Of the late worthy Archbishop
Drummond—His sentiments respecting the stage.*

MY engagements, and pursuits in London, for the five years succeeding, as they are quite unconnected with theatrical concerns of Edinburgh, shall be passed over in silence. One circumstance only, as it redounds to the honour of a Right Honourable and Reverend Prelate, and a native of Scotland, I feel an involuntary impulse to make known; sincerely trusting, that so rich a sample of benignity, condescension, and Christian charity, will not only attract the attention of his brethren, the clergy of North Britain, but stand forward as an example worthy of their imitation.

My father was a clergyman of the church of England. He held two livings in the diocese of York; one for life, in the gift of the

Earl of Thanet, to whom he had likewise the honour of being chaplain. The other during the pleasure-only of his Diocesan *.

AT that period, the parties of Whig and Tory ran prodigiously high. The Earl was a staunch Tory; the Archbishop as violent on the contrary side.

AN opposition for a member for the county took place, in the room of Lord Morpeth, who was chosen at the general election 1741, and died in August that year. Nearly at the same time, if not by the same post, my father received two letters, to the following purport:—

SIR,

THE election is approaching; as you value my future favour, you will vote for Mr Fox.

Grosvenor Square.

THANET.

SIR,

AT the ensuing election, I expect you will give your vote and interest to Mr Turner.

Bishopthorpe.

EBOR.

The Reverend Mr Jackson, of Kieghley.

So

♦ Lancelot Blackburne.

So situated, it was both my father's inclination and his interest to remain neuter. He applied to both parties, earnestly soliciting so to do; but no excuse would be admitted. He that is not for us is against us, was the mutual conclusion, and he must declare. His *dilemma* was obviously distressing. If he voted for one, he was to loose the favour of his patron, and the next presentation of a valuable rectory, which he had long been promised. If for the other, he was instantly to give up the living he held at pleasure, and must never more expect preferment in the church.

Thus reduced to the necessity of declaring himself, he followed his natural interest, which accorded likewise with his principles, and voted for the friend of his patron.

THE Archbishop sent him an instant order to remove; and, *with his own hand*, placed a mark against his name in the court books, that no favour should ever be granted him. This injunction did not, however, long remain in force, as His Grace died in London, 1743.

My father, solacing himself with a good conscience, and the comfort of having acted

as

as he ought, retired to his other living, which, though small, he had the comfort of knowing, that nothing but death could take from him.

By the interest of Mr Fox, and with the consent of the Earl of Thanet, he removed to Doncaster, where his emoluments were supposed to amount to more than an equivalent for what he had been deprived of. It was there I entered upon the first rudiments of my education; having been intended for the church. But my road through life has been by a different rout, which, I will venture to affirm, was occasioned from the effects of Lord Thanet's displeasure. For had I been permitted to continue in the habits of friendship with the son, I know not what connections might have been formed, that would have enabled me to have moved in a very different sphere.

FROM Doncaster my father was again recalled to his living; and, upon non-compliance, was given to understand, that his stipend would be retained. This, his Lordship alleged, was a measure he was under the necessity of enforcing, at the request of the parish-

parishioners, who insisted, that their pastor should reside among them, though his absence had been ably supplied by Doctor Dehane, who bore an unexceptionable character, and had been approved of by themselves.

My father remonstrated; and, I remember, went to London on the occasion : but, finding the Earl immoveable, of two evils he chose, as he thought, the least. He obeyed the summons, returned to his cure, and consigned me to the care of his brother, who resided upon a small paternal estate, afterwards inherited by me. It was in the neighbourhood of Kirkby Lonsdale, in Westmoreland, where, at the grammar school, I finished my study of the classics.

ON calling, as usual, at the castle*, for that part of his annual stipend which was due from the Earl of Thanet, he was told by the steward, that orders had been left by his Lordship that it should not be paid. This information surprised him not a little, particularly as he had complied with the Earl's request. But what was his astonishment to be farther

* Skipton Castle in Craven.

farther acquainted, that his Lordship would be much pleased with his resignation.

WHETHER Lord Thanet had taken offence at the supposed reluctance of Mr Jackson to step forward on that occasion, which proceeded neither from a difference of opinion in politics, or a want of attention to the interest of his patron, but merely from the critical situation in which he was placed ; for I knew his heart ; or from what other cause his friendship had been alienated from my father, has never yet transpired ; for no cause would his Lordship ever assign, though frequently entreated by Mr Jackson so to do. He persisted in this resolution to the day of his death ; which deprived my father of twenty pounds of his annual income for twenty years, and me of a more finished education, with Lord Tufton, at Geneva, a youth of my own age, as had been previously settled by our fathers, while they were upon terms of intimacy.

ON the approach of my first benefit at Drury Lane, I was advised to make my situation known to Lord Thanet, and Lady Bingley,

Bingley, whose husband was the Mr Fox, since Lord Bingley, for whose interest my father had been so great a sufferer.

I HAD built much upon their favour and protection. The one had served me upon her lap, with the choicest dainties at her table: with the other I was acquainted when a boy. He had often blamed the obstinacy of the Earl, in refusing justice to my father: "But, oh!" said he frequently to him, "when I come to be Lord, you shall not seek a second time for redress." From these circumstances, I thought I had only to make the application to obtain all I wished; but my hopes, as they often have been, were placed upon a sandy foundation.

I ADDRESSED a very polite card to each of these noble personages, requesting their patronage, and signifying that I would do myself the honour of waiting on them personally for the answers. I was informed by Lady Bingley's gentlewoman, that "her Ladyship could not be seen. It will be needless for you, Sir, to call again. I read your card, and am ordered by my Lady to acquaint

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you,

you, that her Ladyship never encourages any actors benefit." She could lavish hundreds, however, upon those of Italian fingers.

LORD THANET's valet, with great politeness, was sorry to acquaint me, that his Lord was that morning engaged, and, more unfortunately so, on my night, or otherwise he would have attended. From himself he took the liberty of advising me, as I valued my own interest, not to insinuate that there were any arrears due from his Lordship to my father. "You know, Sir, it is no compulsory matter, and would therefore be better dropped; and besides, take care how you touch my Lord's character, for it will come round to his ear, and the consequence to you may be unpleasant."

I LEFT Cavendish and Grosvenor Squares in no very pleasing turn of temper; returning to my apartment with my pride not a little lowered, and my feelings hurt.

I DID not, however, follow the lacquey's advice. Indignation and resentment were afloat, and I meditated an instant assertion of right.

right. In spite of the superiority of riches, rank, and privilege, I determined to enter the lists with Lord Thanet; for having been so lately a *Prince*, I had less hesitation in contending with a *Lord*; and

“ Who could resist me in a parent’s cause?”

I DREW out a hasty memorial, in terms strongly pointed: they were, however, somewhat softened by the advice and correction of Mr Garrick. The coolness of his experience meliorated the heat of youth. I had three copies prepared; inclosed one to the Archbishop of York, another for Sir Anthony Abdy, Lord Thanet’s agent, and the last, as my dernier resort, was to be delivered to the King the next levee day. This honourary trouble was rendered unnecessary, as the sequel will explain.

THE two first procured me an almost immediate interview. The one was short; but satisfactory. Sir Anthony Abdy was much of the gentleman, affable and polite. He professed being ignorant of the matter; and was certain the noble Lord, for whom he acted, would not knowingly persist in such an ap-
G 2
parent

parent piece of injustice—supposed, that in some circumstances, I might be mistaken—that the paper contained strong charges—hoped, for my own sake, I had well considered the allegations I had given in—and advised me to take no farther steps, till he should speak with Lord Thanet on the subject. I acquiesced, and took my leave.

My visit to his Grace of York was of longer duration, more successful in its consequences, and so flattering in its tendency, both to myself personally, and to the profession in which I was embarked, as to prove the sole creation of this chapter.

I FOUND his Grace at breakfast in his study, alone, I presume intentionally so. His person was commanding, and his manner and deportment such as I expected to behold in one who could be deemed worthy to fill so dignified a station.

AFTER desiring me, with great complacency, to be seated, “You are,” says his Grace, “I presume, Mr Jackson?”—“Yes, my Lord.”—“You reside in the Temple?”—
“I do,

“ I do, my Lord.”—“ You belong to the law?”—“ No, Sir.”—“ I judged so by the place of your residence.”——No answer from me to this delicate mode of enforcing the question.

“ YOUR father now lives at Beenham in Berks ?”—“ He does, my Lord. Having long and frequently applied for the payment of his arrears ; being a widower, lonesome, and unpleasantly situated, through party feuds, with some of his parishioners, whom he suspected, and, I believe, very justly, of being the cause of Lord Thanet’s original disgust, he was desirous of a change of situation : He wished also to be nearer me. Leaving, therefore, his own church under the care of an approved curate, he accepted himself of that of Beenham. Doctor Stackhouse wrote his celebrated history of the Bible in the house where my father now dwells.”

“ I HAVE a memorial from you,” replied his Grace, “ respecting your father, of a very serious nature. Great reflections must either fall upon you, Sir, or the noble Lord complained of. I have no reason to suspect the truth of your assertions ; but I sent for you to know

know more fully from yourself the particulars of this charge, which, if substantiated, is certainly an act of very great oppression, and, indeed, ingratitude, particularly in the old Lord."

I RELATED every thing I knew concerning the matter minutely, with many aggravations too complicated and numerous to mention here. His Grace listened to me with great complacency and attention, and promised to make immediate enquiry into the facts I had stated, upon the spot, where, he said, he should be on a visitation to that part of his diocese; and assured me, that he would make a visit on purpose to my father's parish.

I WAS upon my legs, and on the point of departing, when I observed to his Grace, that when he asked if I belonged to the law, I had continued silent. I now informed his Grace, that I had no intention of concealing my profession, nor was I in the least ashamed of making the declaration; but that being apprehensive, had I told it immediately, my cause might have been thereby injured, as I feared his Grace might have been so prejudiced,

diced, as not to have listened to me with the same attention as if I had been in any other line of business.—“ I am, my Lord, upon the stage.”—A pause for a moment.

SIR,

I KNOW no distinction of persons. I respect worth wherever it is found. Goodness may adorn the breast of an actor as well as that of a divine. And I see no just reason why I should discredit or disregard you more for being on the stage, than if you were in the pulpit, provided you have kept your character. I shall enquire into your conduct, and if I find it such as I can sanction with credit, you shall always have my patronage and support.

“ BUT come, Sir,” continued his Grace, “ if you are not in a hurry, let me ask you a question or two.” He rang for chocolate, which he desired I would take, and proceeded. “ You say you are on the stage ; what parts have you done ?” I told him it was my first season : That I had, notwithstanding, appeared in *Oroonoko*, *Romeo*, *Monefes*, *Lord Guilford Dudley*, *Polidore*, &c.

“ I AM

“ I AM glad,” says his Grace, “ you stand so forward. I shall speak to Mr Garrick concerning you : In the mean time, make my compliments to him, and tell him, I expect he will use you well. I do not go to the theatre myself ; but let me know when your night comes, and I shall send my family.” His Grace saw me to the door, and told the porter, that whenever I called, he should be at home. He then again wished me well ;

“ Vow’d me assistance, and perform’d it too.”

By the interposition of his Grace, the Earl of Thanet was induced to renounce his error. The arrears were paid me by Sir Anthony Abdy. The stipend, in future, was settled upon a landed estate ; and my father had a dispensation to continue at Beenham for life, still holding his living in Yorkshire ; being excused from attending upon visitations, or any other extraordinary occasion.

SUCH were the effects of the benign auspices and successful exertions of the Right Honourable and Right Reverend ROBERT DRUMMOND, Archbishop of York, the brother of the

the late, and father of the present, Earl of Kinnoul.

AND thus was a worthy member of the church released from the hand of oppression, and rendered happy : but happiness on earth is rarely perfect, and never certain. No sooner had he acquired the summit of his wishes in this life, than he was summoned to another. He caught a fever at the age of seventy-five, and expired in my arms ; having been fifty-two of those years in holy orders, with unfulfilled honour and unblemished heart At his particular desire, he was deposited at the east end of the church of Beenham, by the side of his predecessor, the late Reverend Doctor Stackhouse.

Requiescat in pace.



SECT.

S E C T. IV.

The resignation of Mr Love—Mr John Dowson and Mr David Beatt managers—Disputes with Mr Stayley—Riots in consequence—Demolition of the interior parts of the theatre—Anecdotes of Mrs Ward, Mrs Baker, and Mr Younger—Theatre, property, and patent bought by Mr Ross—The present Theatre Royal built—Mr Foote manager—Messrs Digges and Bland—Corri—Wilkinson—The theatre and its appendages purchased by Mr Jackson.

all THE resignation of Mr Love ushered in Mr John Dowson, of Newcastle, to the notice of the public; who became copartner with Mr Beatt in the management, together with the proprietary of the wardrobe, moveables, and old debts.

THIS gentleman, without any theatrical experience, or the knowledge of stage business, stepped forward as the joint conductor of an undertaking for which he was obviously unfit.

unfit. He possessed one qualification, indeed, on many occasions necessary, the command of some ready money. This, however, was not long in running through, and he consequently found it adviseable to fell out.

I WAS then, as I had frequently been, in Edinburgh, though not in my professional line, and became the purchaser. The theatre in the Canongate, with all its appurtenances, for the sum of L. 1400, was instantly to be put into my possession; the rights of the gentlemen proprietors, who were to join in the conveyance, also included; together with an obligation from them to secure to me the property, and the right of performance in Edinburgh, by a patent to be procured immediately, at their instance, but at my expence.

EVERY thing was finally adjusted between the parties, and the writings were to have been signed the next day.

THE preceeding evening I visited the theatre, where, in one of the boxes, I had an unexpected interview with an honourable personage, unnecessary, on this occasion, to be

H 2 introduced,

introduced, which overturned the whole business. I wrote a card that night, intimating my resolution of relinquishing my bargain ; and determined, from that moment, to bid adieu to every connection with the stage for ever.

My declining this agreement proved not only a circumstance, individually to me, of the utmost consequence, but a matter of import to the interests of those concerned in the Canongate theatre, and the community of the city of Edinburgh at large.

A MR STAYLEY, an itinerant actor, had found the means, by ingratiating himself into the favour of several individuals, to procure an interest, which he judged sufficient to force for him an engagement upon the Edinburgh theatre ; the managers, deeming his terms too high, having refused to admit him as a member of their company.

MR STAYLEY, to a tincture of genius, had acquired a smattering of stage knowledge, which might have rendered him an useful member to a theatre ; but a mediocrity in the science

science did not suit his VAST IDEAS. He had adopted, in compliance with the taste of his audience, a pomposity in his pronunciation, and an eccentricity of tones, and mode of deportment, which, by a country audience, was pronounced *great acting*.

I ACCIDENTALLY saw him perform *Macbeth* at a provincial theatre. In the battle between him and *Macduff*, after fighting round each front wing, and having been ten times apparently run through the body, and twice down, he got up, and, staggering towards the lamps, fell a third time; where, upon one knee, or writhing in different postures, he uttered a dying speech of five-and-twenty lines, composed by himself, and, at length, expired amidst a thunder of applause: And the bulk of the audience, retiring, pronounced him the first actor in the world.

HE had the art, for a time, to impose these extravagances, even upon some of the Edinburgh critics, as the ebullition of sterling merit; in consequence of which, a very few nights after I had taken that hasty resolution before recited, some of the most violent of his partizans

partizans assembled in the pit, and called for the manager. The sum of their requisition was, that Mr Stayley should be engaged. He was in waiting in one of the upper boxes; and was, at the desire of the party, with the forced consent of the managers, admitted upon the stage to tell *his own story*.

HE advanced forward to the audience, in order to deliver, obviously, a prepared speech. "I am proud," says he, "and sorry thus to appear before this audience: proud for the honour, and sorry for the cause ———"

THE partial and prepared few who had espoused the part of the actor, though they had procured him an entrance to the stage, could not command the voice of the house. The friends of the managers, and the lovers of order, stopped the speaker short by a majority of voices, insisting upon the amusements of the evening being continued.

STAYLEY retired disappointed and disconcerted, amidst a confused clamour; and the play and farce went on without farther molestation.

WHEN

WHEN the curtain dropped, the malecontents remained behind; and, though scanty in their numbers, made so violent and successful an effort upon the fears of the managers, as to extort from them a promise that Mr Stayley should be engaged.

THIS compulsory consent, on the part of the managers, was immediately retracted by them and the performers, in the following hand-bill:—

THEATRE.

Edinburgh, January 12. 1767.

THE Managers and Performers humbly hope, that, from the dangerous situation both They and the Theatre were in on Saturday night, after the farce was over, from a party who staid behind the rest of the audience, in behalf of Mr *Stayley*, and, by throwing stones, pieces of sticks, halfpence, and lighted candles, COMPELLED a promise of his being engaged, as the ONLY MEANS left to *preserve the Theatre from fire and destruction*, they shall stand justified to the public in suspending all
Entertainments,

Entertainments, till they can be assured of a proper protection ; and also of refusing to admit, as one of their community, a Man capable of taking such unwarrantable and wicked means to gain his ends.

J. DOWSON. }
D. BEATT. }

JAMES AICKIN.
JOSEPH YOUNGER.
A. J. DIDIER.
W. SEDGWICK.
WILLIAM ADAMS.
C. SMITH.
CHA. TINDAL.
THO. LANCASHIRE.
SIMEON QUIN.
THO. YOUNG.

THE same day, bills were also pasted up and distributed through the town.

THEATRE.

THERE WILL BE
NO PLAY
TILL FURTHER NOTICE,

THUS the theatrical entertainments were, for a while, totally suspended, the time being taken up in dispersing hand-bills and addresses

ses by both parties. At length the managers, having taken their resolution, the house was opened on Saturday the 24th of January 1767.

THE audience were more hostile than ever. A parley was obtained ; and the terms of capitulation were, " that one of the players, in the name of the rest, should beg pardon of the audience, for some reflections in their publications." This satisfaction being refused, hostilities commenced.

APPREHENSIVE of an attack, from perceiving the files of the enemy so much augmented, the garrison had continued under arms. The assailants pressed forward on the word. They crossed the iron-spiked barriers upon the seats they had torn up, and ascended the platform. Rails of lattices, branches of chandeliers, and broken benches, were their brandished weapons. To these were opposed truncheons, spears, and battle-axes, mock implements of war, that had long been inured to conquest. Agincourt and Bosworth Field were vouchers of their triumphs. Fatal reverse ! The fort was carried ; and those who escaped not through casements, or some private ways,

I were

were compelled to surrender at discretion. The inside of the building was demolished, the moveables ransacked, and the fixtures destroyed.

A DETACHMENT of the city guard advanced, but were repulsed. A reinforcement from the castle was then dispatched to the relief of the besieged ; but, before it arrived, the place was taken, and the garrison put to the rout.

Am MR JAMES AJCKIN was at that time at the head of the Canongate company. After the dispute, he accepted of an engagement in Drury Lane, where he still continues, a credit to the stage both in his private and his public character.

THE gentlemen proprietors " brought an action of damages against those concerned in the riot, in which their property was destroyed. The latter, with great address, traversed it by a counter-action against the proprietors, for having plays acted in their house, contrary to act of Parliament. Many of those proprietors were now raised to the Bench ; hardly a quorum remained to decide the question :

tion: the ludicrousness of the case was perceived, and both actions dropped*."

HAD my bargain for the theatre with Mr Dowson been completed, the riot, and consequent destruction of the house, would thereby have been prevented; for it was my avowed determination, the moment I was invested with the power, to have engaged Mr Stayley; and as long as they chose to come, the public should have seen him.

THERE was at this time a double warfare in the Edinburgh theatrical world. Besides the contention with Stayley and the managers, in which the town had already interposed, there was a civil contest between the heroines.

"Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere."

The one could bear no equal, the other no superior.

MRS WARD, who, as before observed, was the original *Lady Randolph*, had, from that circumstance, and by having an opportunity

I 2

of

* *Arnot's History of Edinburgh*, p. 370.

of playing many of her favourite characters with Mr Digges, acquired no small degree of estimation with the town.

ON her agreement with the managers, she had stipulated that her name should be particularized from the rest of the performers, in the advertisements of the day, by an enlarged type,

“ Whereby she might receive

“ Particular addition from the bill,

“ That writes them all alike.”

MRS BAKER, a rising favourite, insisted that her name should be of the same size. Both of them could not be complied with. Mr Younger, who had been appointed by Dowson and Beatt their deputy, in an address to the public acquaints them, that “ Mrs Ward had agreed for her choice of parts, distinction of name in the bill, and every other preference which her rank as an actress entitled her to;” and officially informs Mrs Baker, “ that he could not possibly comply with her request of having her name distinguished in the Monday’s bills,” the night on which the managers had suspended the
enter-

entertainments of the evening ; a step which they were no doubt the more readily induced to take, from this addition to their embarrassments. Mrs Baker's reply to Mr Younger's card was,

SIR,

THE *Town* does not more heartily laugh at your *acting*, than I do at your *power*. I have formed no engagements with you. I will take no directions from you. I have behaved justly. I sent Mr Dowson word before the bills were printed, that if he would not put in my name as Mr Bland had dictated, he must not put it in *at all*. Surely it is in my option to play *Miss Stirling*, or let it alone. The part is Mrs Robson's. I persist in my resolution of not doing it, except my name is distinguished. If therefore it is neither altered nor taken out on Monday, I must excuse myself to the *Town*, (which has ever been kindly partial to me) in the manner I think best ; and I believe you will find, in the public opinion, that *nobody* in this company deserves greater distinction than

ELIZA BAKER.

To Mr Younger.

LETTER

LETTER after letter passed on the subject, and reply upon reply, which finally produced addressees to the public. These procured favourites to each among a partial few, but more generally created disgust against the authors, for teizing them with matters in which they had no concern.

THIS contention most certainly heightened the theatrical ferment; and Mr Stayley's dispute with the managers, in which the town was already embarked, completed the catastrophe. To prevent altercations of this kind, I never suffered any distinction of names in the bills; nor attempted to point out where consequence or merit lay; that I wished to leave to the decision of the audience.

I WAS acquainted with Mrs Baker in London, before her first visit to Edinburgh. She was the daughter of Dr Clendon upon Ludgate Hill. She had great theatrical abilities, but was unfortunate in her figure, which was corpulent, and consequently ill suited to many characters in which it was her ambition to tread. She possessed a vast fund of understanding, both natural and acquired, and was a most
facetious

facetious companion. She had also an excellent knack at letter-writing, as a proof of which, I beg leave to refer the reader to the conclusion of Mr Wilkinson's works ; which likewise does credit to that author, for his selection of those epistles for publication. But she had an unbounded spirit, which frequently mounted into passions, that involved her in broils, particularly with managers.

IN one of these paroxysms, she quarrelled afterwards with Mr Digges, quitted the stage, and assumed the profession of a school-mistress, to teach the English language, for which she was completely qualified. In this situation, she acquitted herself with great credit, and had the address, when Mr Ross wished to part with his theatre, to prevail upon a gentleman, whose children she taught, to advance her L.3000 for the purchase. The money was ready, and the bargain made; but before the deed could be drawn out and signed, the *great idea*, that at last

“ She should move, and speak, and be herself a queen,”

so forcibly struck her vital movement, that she
retired

retired to her chamber, and almost instantly expired. Thus she literally lived in a storm, and died in a convulsion of joy.

THE theatre, thus reduced to a mere shell, received a hasty and a temporary repair; and the dramatic entertainments were resumed before the end of the winter season.

MR ROSS, to make use of a common phrase, stepped immediately into my shoes, the agreement being transferred to him precisely on the same terms; only, that instead of L. 1400, he was to give no more than L. 1100; the deduction, I presume, being occasioned by the property having been lessened from the effects of the riot.

IN consequence of this agreement, the gentlemen proprietors, who, as before observed, had applied for an act of Parliament, in order to establish a theatre by Royal Patent, as soon as it was obtained*, conveyed it to the purchaser of the property, Mr David Ross of Covent Garden.

MR

* September 2. 1767.

Lu

of

Sed nil nisi bonum de mortuis.

22. 73

shares of L. 100 each, by *Twenty-five Gentlemen*.

THE conditions were, that each subscriber should receive three pounds of interest *per annum*, with personal admission to all the exhibitions of the theatre; and that the patent, house, ornaments, scenery, and wardrobe should be mortgaged to them for their security.

Ref.

MR ROSS, in consequence of this subscription, built and furnished the present Theatre Royal, in a very respectable style.

BESIDES the L. 2500 of subscription-money, this theatre, with other parts of the undertaking, cost upwards of L. 2500 Sterling. To these sums are to be added the two annuities of L. 50 each, to Mrs Hamilton and Mrs Thomson, original proprietors, and other debts and conditions of the bargain, which, at the lowest estimation, amounted to L. 1900 more.

MR ROSS's expences for the purchase and building then stood thus :

Purchase

THE SCOTTISH STAGE. 75

Purchase from the proprietors, L. 1100	0	0
Expence of patent, with clause in the act of Parliament,	300	0 0
25. Subscribers at L. 100 each,	2500	0 0
Expence of building above that sum, - - -	2500	0 0
Two annuities of L. 50, only at five years purchase, -	500	0 0
	<hr/>	
	L. 6900	0 0

THIS advance being above the abilities of the patentee, it involved him in debt and inconvenience. He was obliged, therefore, to let the theatre to other managers. The rents received, with incidental abatements, scarcely returned 5 *per cent.* upon the original sums advanced, and consequently there remained no fund for discharging the patentee's debts.

THE intermediate lessees, having no interest in the property, used the theatre as they found it; without making the necessary additions and repairs; and consequently the scenery, wardrobe, and ornaments, were at last worn out, and the fabric of the house itself neglected.

IN

IN this situation, I purchased from Mr Rofs the whole property and patent, upon several conditions ; and particularly, that I should engage to pay the debts and incumberances of the theatre, find security to Mr Rofs for an annuity of L. 150 *per annum*, for the term of his life, and take upon me the arrears of interest due to the proprietors, which last article alone amounted to upwards of L.1000.

AFTER the declaration I had made, of quitting *every connection with the stage for ever*, it might require some explanation to free me from the imputation of an instability of conduct, in my pursuits through life.

THIS apparent inconsistency could easily be explained, and consequently expunged ; were I to enter into private transactions and events, unnecessary on this, or perhaps on any other occasion, to disclose ; suffice it therefore to say, that I found it advisable to return to a profession that I had formerly given up.

THE first season of Mr Rofs's management, (1768) I appeared again on the Edinburgh theatre, in the part of *Romeo*. A daughter of
Mr

Mr Sowdon's, under the assumed name of Brown, was the *Juliet*. She was afterwards Mrs Jackson of the Theatre Royal of Covent Garden, and now of that of Edinburgh.

THE house had been opened, for the first time, under the sanction of law, on the evening of December 9th 1767, with the play of the *Earl of Essex*; the part of *Essex* by Mr Rofs. Previous to which he spoke an occasional prologue, written by James Boswell, Esq; in which he thus noticed the acquisition of the *Royal Grant*.

This night lov'd GEORGE's free enlighten'd age,
Bids *Royal Favour* shield the SCOTTISH STAGE :
His Royal Favour ev'ry bosom cheers ;
The Drama now with dignity appears.

THE season turned out advantageous to the manager. His subscriptions for a new theatre were filled, and the first stone of the building was laid upon the east side of the north end of the New Bridge, the three main arches of which were then turned ; till that could be completed, he gave the theatre in the Canongate a slight repair, and continued to perform in it till the close of the season.

THE

THE following year, (December 1769) the new theatre was opened*; but not with that torrent of success with which the manager had been flattered. Depending too much upon the novelty of new walls, new scenery, and new decorations, he had neglected the providing a company of performers, that ought to have kept pace with the splendour of the house. The fourth abutment of the bridge, too, which could not be foreseen, gave way. This greatly depressed the theatrical spirit of the audience, and damped the ardor for building in St Andrew's Square and its environs, then proceeding very rapidly forward.

Mr Ross, depressed and disgusted by fortune and the town, had neither fortitude nor perseverance to wait a favourable change in either; but, in a fit of despair, let his theatre for three years to Mr Foote, for five hundred guineas a-year. That gentleman, by producing an excellent company†, a better perhaps has not been seen in Edinburgh, retired to his villa at West End, before the expiration of the season, with L. 1000 in his pocket, after paying all expences.

A THOU-

* The Edinburgh Theatre, according to the then advanced prices of 3s. 2s. and 1s. will hold, with convenience, about L. 440.

† See Appendix, No. VII.

A THOUSAND pound for the managerial cares and confinement through a whole winter, upon the heels of a fatiguing summer campaign at his own theatre in the Hay Market, was no object to Mr Foote ; he therefore disposed of his lease to Messrs Digges and Bland in partnership. When the lease was out, they agreed with Mr Ross for a renewal, upon the same terms, for five years.

THE character of Mr Digges, both as an actor and manager, was so well known and established, as to render any investigation in either capacity here unnecessary. That of his colleague, Mr Bland, is not, I presume, so universally understood.

MR JOHN BLAND *senior* has been twenty-three years treasurer of this theatre, ten of which were during my management. Since my connection with him, which was two years previous to that period, I have ever found him a worthy and a respectable man. He was eldest son to an eminent Civilian in Ireland, who arrived to be judge of the Prerogative Court. After having taken his degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts, in the university

university of Dublin, he was entered in the Temple in London, and is of an older standing than most of the Benchers there.

HE had a turn, however, for the army, which superceding the law, he obtained a cornetcy in General Bland's regiment of dragoons, who was his relation as well as name-fake. He served at the battle of *Dettingen*; was taken prisoner in that of *Fontenoy*; and was also in the disturbances of the year FORTY-FIVE, at the skirmish on *Clifton Moor*, where he fought by the side of *General Honeywood*, when that gallant officer fell covered with wounds. On the retreat of the enemy, the General was carried in a mangled condition to Appleby, where, to the surprise of all, he recovered. He was afterwards so much respected there, from the foregoing circumstance, and became so attached to the place, that he was elected one of their members, and continued so to the day of his death. Having a vote for the county, it was there I had the honour of knowing him, of being shewn by him the scars of those mouthed wounds he had received, and of hearing from himself the foregoing particulars.

AT

At all these places, and in other trying situations, Mr Bland has always acquitted himself with great credit.

MR ROSS, at the outset of his undertaking in Edinburgh, received him as a quarter partner, for the advance of some hundred pounds. He afterwards compromised the matter with him, for an annuity of L.100 a-year. But being involved in his circumstances along with Mr Digges, having been bound to Mr Ross for the rent of the theatre, it was sunk in the general wreck.

FIVE years out of the three-and-twenty, Mr Bland was manager as well as treasurer; and it was owing to his exertions, that Mrs Hartley's theatrical abilities were made known to the world, as she was by him introduced upon the Edinburgh stage, in the year 1771.

MRS JORDAN, the celebrated actress, is Mr Bland's niece, being the daughter of Francis Bland, Esq; a younger brother of the Mr Bland of whom I am speaking, and Miss
L Grace

Jacob

Grace Phillips, the daughter of a clergyman in Wales.

UNDER these different managements, since Mrs Bellamy's season, Mr Sheridan, Mr Wilkinson, Mr and Mrs Yates, Mr and Mrs Barry, Mr Foote, Mr Reddish, and Miss Catley, were seen upon the Edinburgh stage.

THE theatre was afterwards rented by Mr Corri, then by Mr Wilkinson, for separate years ; till, finally, it was purchased by me of the patentee, David Ross, Esq; as before stated.

John

THIS transaction took place at London, November 10. 1781.

THE moment I came into possession, I proceeded to put it into the best possible condition. I gave the house a complete repair, put on a new roof, and furnished it with new scenery, ornaments, properties, and a wardrobe superior to the former ones, and not inferior to any in the kingdom, out of London.

I AM

I AM conscious at all times, of having exerted my utmost industry and abilities in the discharge of my duty. I have on all occasions endeavoured to procure the best performers. There is not a person of any merit upon the stage, who has not visited Edinburgh, or to whom I have not made particular applications, and suitable offers. Excepting that of Mr Foote, the companies under my care have been equal to any brought by former managers, and at all times inferior to none in the island, out of the metropolis of England.

THE *Dramatis Personæ* of the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh, for the last ten years, shall vouch for this assertion.

L 2

S E C T.

S E C T. V.

List of Performers at the Theatre Royal Edinburgh, from the year 1781 to 1792 inclusive.

1781-2.

✓ Mr Ward,
 Woods,
 ✓ Gaudry,
 Williamfon,
 Johnson,
 Knight,
 Banks,
 Marshall,
 Hollingsworth,
 Sutherland,
 T. Banks,
 Hallion,
 Charteris,
 Taylor,
 Simpson,
 Tannet,
 Mountfort,
 And Jackson.

— Mrs Bulkley, ✓
 Ward,
 Knivcton, ✓
 Marshall,
 Henderfon,
 Tannet,
 Charteris,
 Mountfort,
 Gaudry,
 Woods,
 Jackson,
 Miss Kirby ✓

S U M M E R.

— Mr Leoni,
 Davies,
 Aldridge.

Miss Capon.

1783.

Mr Woods,	— Mrs Bulkley,
Johnson,	— Cornelys,
Grift,	Baddeley,
Mofs,	Burden,
— Lamash, ✓	Walcot,
— Ward,	Woods,
Fowler,	Henderfon,
Kelly,	Sparks,
Tannet,	Charteris,
Bell,	Mountfort,
Hallion,	Bland,
Sparks,	Tannet,
Simpfon,	Jackson,
Dodd,	Miss Farren.
Benfon,	
Bland <i>sen.</i>	
Bland <i>jun.</i>	
J. Bland,	
Charteris,	
T. Banks,	
Mountfort.	

SUMMER.

Mr Ryder.

1784

Mr Cautherley,
 Woods,
 Collins,
 Johnson,
 Sutherland,
 Lamash,
 Mofs,
 W. Wells,
 Jones,
 Hallion,
 Bell,
 Sparks,
 Bland *sen.*
 Bland *jun.*
 J. Bland,
 Dalton,
 Simpson,
 Mountfort,
 Tannet,
 Davis,
 Charteris,

Miss Morris,
 Mrs Baddeley,
 Woods,
 Henderson,
 Charteris,
 W. Wells,
 Sparks,
 Mountfort,
 Bland,
 Tannet,
 Jackson.

SUMMER.

Mr Henderson.

Mrs Siddons,

First Engagement in Edinburgh.

1785.

— Mr Yates,	— Mrs Yates,
— Clinch,	— Bulkley,
— Woods,	— Baddeley,
— Ward,	— Sparks,
— Kipling,	— W. Wells,
— Duncan,	— Duncan,
— Powell,	— Waylett,
— Lamash,	— Kipling,
— Everard,	— Woods,
— Hallion,	— Henderfon,
— Bell,	— Charteris,
— Sparks,	— Mountfort,
— W. Wells,	— Bland,
— Waylett,	— Jackson.
— Davis,	
— Mountfort,	
— Bland <i>sen.</i>	
— Bland <i>jun.</i>	
— J. Bland,	
— Charteris.	

SUMMER.

Mr Clinch.

Mrs Siddons,
Second Engagement.
 Miss Kemble.

1786.

Mr Wilson,
 Woods,
 Clinch,
 Iliff,
 O'Reilly,
 Kipling,
 Kemble,
 Bell,
 Betterton,
 Hallion,
 Michel,
 W. Wells,
 Lamash,
 Sparks,
 Mountfort,
 Le Brun,
 Bland *sen.*
 Bland *jun.*
 J. Bland,
 Charteris,
 Yates,
 Mayson.

— Mrs Crawford,
 W. Wells,
 Woods,
 Sparks,
 O'Reilly,
 — Kemble,
 Charteris,
 Kipling,
 Mountfort,
 Bland,
 Iliff,
 Jackson.

SUMMER.

Mr Pope.

Mrs Pope,
 Jordan,
First Engagement.
 Mrs Kennedy,
The celebrated Singer.

1787.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| — Mr Fennell, | Mrs Robinson, |
| Woods, | Wroton, |
| — Moss, | Iliff, |
| Iliff, | Woods, |
| — Lamash, | — Archer, |
| — Wilfon, | — Kemble, |
| Ward, | Charteris, |
| — Archer, | Villars, |
| Kemble, | — Sparks, |
| Bell, | W. Wells, |
| Hallion, | Bland, |
| — Sparks, | Lamash, |
| Villars, | Jackfon. |
| Yates, | |
| W. Wells, | |
| Bland <i>sen.</i> | |
| Bland <i>jun.</i> | |
| J. Bland, | |
| Charteris, | |
| Mayfon, | |
| Charteris <i>jun.</i> | |
| Michell, | |
| Tumblers, | |
| — And Lee-Lewes, <i>Four Nights.</i> | |

SUMMER.

Mrs Jordan,

Her Second Engagement.

M

HISTORY OF

1788.

Mr Fennell,
 Woods,
 Wilfon,
 Mofs,
 Williamfon,
 Bell,
 Hallion,
 Archer,
 Francis,
 Sparks,
 Bland *sen.*
 Bland *jun.*
 J. Bland,
 Villars,
 Charteris,
 Charteris *jun.*

Mrs Bulkley,
 Woods,
 Brooks,
 Strickland,
 W. Wells,
 Villars,
 Sparks,
 Charteris,
 Bland,
 Jackson,
 Miss George.

SUMMER.

Mr Fennell.

Mrs Siddons,
Third Engagement.
 Mrs Perez.

1789.

Mr King,

Holman,

— Wilfon,

Woods,

— Williamfon,

— Mofs,

— Archer,

Bell,

Hallion,

— Sparks,

Charteris,

Bland *sen.*Bland *jun.*

J. Bland,

Henderfon,

Woodroffe,

Finch,

Davis,

Charteris *jun.*

— Miss George,

Hughes,

— Mrs Barresford,

W. Wells,

Charteris,

— Archer,

— Sparks,

— Coates,

Bland,

Jackson.

SUMMER.

Mrs Jordan,

Her Third Engagement.

M 2

1790.

Mr King,
 Pope,
 Wilfon,
 Woods,
 Lamash,
 Mofs,
 Williamfon,
 Taylor,
 Hallion,
 Bell,
 Bland *sen.*
 Bland *jun.*
 J. Bland,
 Charteris,
 Charteris *jun.*
 Sparks,
 Woodroffe,
 Lowe,
 Mapples,
 Archer,
 Mountfort,
 Bonville.

— Mrs Esten,
 Barresford,
 — Taylor,
 W. Wells,
 — Sparks,
 Woods,
 Lowe,
 Clarke,
 Charteris,
 Archer,
 Mountfort,
 Bland,
 Jackson,
 Miss Fontenelle.

SUMMER.

Mr King.

Miss Farren.

1791.

— Mr Ryder,	— Mrs Eften,
Woods,	— Miss Ryder,
Kennedy,	R. Ryder,
— Lamash,	— Mrs Barresford,
— Williamfon,	Kennedy,
Willoughby,	W. Wells,
Hallion,	— Sparks,
Bell,	Elliot,
Guion,	Mountfort,
— Kipling,	Charteris,
Biggs,	Bland,
Williams,	Stewart,
Bland <i>sen.</i>	Biggs,
Bland <i>jun.</i>	Jackson,
J. Bland,	
Charteris,	
Charteris <i>jun.</i>	
Mountfort,	
Bew,	
Sparks,	
Toms,	
Woodroffe.	

SUMMER.

Mrs Eften.

1792.

MR KEMBLE *Manager.*

Mr Kemble,	Mrs Kemble,
Lee-Lewes,	Lee-Lewes,
Woods,	Woods,
Lamalh,	Stuart,
Bell,	Mountfort,
Hallion,	Charteris,
Sparks,	Bland,
Charteris,	* Ware,
Charteris <i>jun.</i>	* Whitmore,
Bland <i>jun.</i>	* Marriot,
J. Bland,	* Miss Grist,
Perry,	* Rofs.
Mountfort,	
* Hill,	
* Whitmore,	
* Moreton,	
* Baker,	Mr Bowden,
* Vertu,	<i>Six Nights at the opening</i>
* Wallack,	<i>of the House.</i>
* Marriot,	
* Meadows.	

SUMMER.

Mr John Kemble, *Six Nights, Second Visit to Edinburgh*
 Mrs Siddons, *at the Races, Fourth Visit to Edinburgh.*

*Mr and Mrs Lee-Lewes came to Edinburgh accidentally ;
 and did not join the Company till February 27.*

Those names marked thus * are the Performers that Mr
 Kemble introduced to the Edinburgh Theatre ; the others
 were belonging to the former Company.

S E C T. VI.

Origin of the Glasgöw stage—Plays in Barrel's dancing-ball—In a temporary booth in the Castle Yard—Lee the manager—Digges and Ward there—The house assaulted by the mob—A regular theatre at the west end of the town erected—Stage set on fire—Mrs Bellamy there—Williams manager—Brown, the famous Copper Captain, there—Messrs Jackson, Bland and Mills—Theatre burnt—New one erected in Dunlop Street—Some impediments to it—How removed—Theatre opened—Arrangements of the future season.

BEFORE we proceed farther to investigate the theatrical events of the foregoing seasons in Edinburgh, it will be necessary to take notice of the dramatic advances in Glasgöw, where there is also a Theatre; which, though upon a smaller scale, is perhaps as compact and convenient in its construction, as that of the metropolis.

THE

THE prejudices that had been universally inculcated against stage representations, and the members of the profession, were not less violent in their operations there, than in the other parts of Scotland. The advances, therefore, towards an establishment for theatrical performances, were rendered proportionally slow. The only historic account I find on the subject, is, that "entertainments in Glasgow for the winter, are dancing and card-assemblies, *per vices*, or week about, concerts of music, and sometimes the players from Edinburgh*."

I HEAR of them in a room, called *Barrel's dancing-ball* †, by a set of itinerants, where they were permitted to fix their portable scenery.

THE first edifice, purposely erected for stage representations, was only *pro tempore*, and that merely a wooden booth; it was placed against *the old wall of the Bishop's Palace*, in an area called the *Castle Yard*, adjoining to the cathedral. Mr Lee was the projector: It was consequently since the year 1752. This hovel

* *Gibson's History of Glasgow*, p. 131.

† In a house upon the east side of the street above the College.

hovel had the credit afterwards of exhibiting to the then audience of Glasgow, Messrs Digges, Love, Stamper, and Mrs Ward. It was little relished by the lower order of people, and was attacked by the weavers, who were spirited on to the assault by Mr Whitfield, with stones, and other missile weapons, but not destroyed: The strong outside wall next the street proved its principal support*,

BETWEEN the first and the nineteenth of the month of April 1762, I accompanied Messrs Beatt and Love to Glasgow, to solicit the building of a regular Theatre, within the liberties of the city, and that, as central as possible. I had not the smallest concern in the undertaking, being no farther interested in its success, but as a well-wisher to the cause: I made it a mere jaunt of pleasure. We were, I remember, two days upon the journey. There was no bridge betwixt Calder and Livingston. The river was high, but being on horseback, and accustomed to these kind of torrents, I passed it without any hesitation, or apprehension of
N danger.

The principal performer in Barrel's Hall was a Mr Lion. Mrs Lamp and Mrs Storer sung there. They were afterwards drowned returning from America, having acquired a plentiful fortune by their profession.

* It was erected in the years 1752 and 1753.

danger. My companions, who were in a chaise, after deliberating for a few moments, also took the stream ; but missing the ford, got intangled amongst the stones, and became really, which is no uncommon case, *managers in distress*. They landed, however, safe on the opposite side, and rested at Whitburn. The road thence at that time, traversing the heights, passed close to the Kirk of Shots, the present one being then only marked out.

THE two days I staid at Glasgow were pleasantly employed in visiting the natural and acquired beauties of the place. In my perambulations around that city, at the present day, the recollection of what I then saw strikes as forcibly upon my comparative ideas, as when I contemplate the change I now behold in St George's and Mary-le-bone Fields, the whole being laid out in regular ranges of streets, where I formerly and frequently enjoyed my *country walks*.

I SPENT the evenings with the managers, from whom I learned, that though, through a number of obtruding difficulties, they had not
succeeded

succeeded to the extent of their wishes, yet in the main point they had prevailed.

FIVE gentlemen * had undertaken to erect a theatre at their own expence, which was to be rented by Messrs Beatt and Love. No one being hardy enough, at any price, to accommodate them with ground for the purpose, within the district of the corporation, they purchased a plat at the west end of the town, without its jurisdiction.

MR MILLER of Westerton, maltman in Glasgow, was the proprietor. He put five shillings the square yard upon his ground; a most extravagant price in those days, and in that situation. The gentlemen remonstrating against the immensity of the price, he replied, that as it was intended to be occupied by a Temple of *Belial*, he should expect an extraordinary sum for the purchase. His demand,

* William McDowall of Castle Semple, William Bogle of Hamilton-Farm, John Baird of Craigton, Robert Bogle of Shettleston, and James Dunlop of Garnkirk, Esquires. Their shares of the expence amounted to L. 100, besides a subscription of L. 200: They sold it to the directors of the assembly, who laid out L. 700 or L. 800 more; so that the whole building cost L. 1500.

demand, however unreasonable, was complied with, and a Theatre in consequence erected.

(Bellamy) MRS BELLAMY, in her life, says, “ upon my first engaging at Edinburgh, the gentlemen of Glasgow offered to build a Theatre by subscription, if our company would promise to perform there in the summer. To this we readily consented, as the inhabitants were not only opulent, but liberal to a degree*.”

WE are willing to make every allowance to Mrs Bellamy's assertion ; but cannot help observing, that this agreement took place a month before her engagement in Edinburgh commenced, or her visit to that city was even thought of. She opened the house indeed, and I have no hesitation in concluding, that a supposition of that event accelerated the completion of the building. Though the gentlemen had raised the fabrick, they could not lay the ferment in the minds of the lower order of men. Before the intended night of opening, the house was set on fire, and with difficulty saved from being totally reduced to ashes.

“ WHEN

* Vol. IV. p. 56.

“WHEN we arrived at Glasgow,” continues Mrs Bellamy, “one of the performers exclaimed, ‘Madam, you are ruined, for you have nothing left, but what you have with you in the chaises.’ I was then informed, that the stage of the new Theatre had been set on fire the night before, and that all my paraphernalia and wardrobe, which lay there unpacked, had been consumed by the flames.*”

“THE conflagration, I found, was occasioned by the following circumstance: A methodist teacher, who held forth in that city, told his auditors, that he dreamed the preceding night, he was in the infernal regions, at a grand entertainment, where all the devils in hell were present, when Lucifer their chief gave for a toast, the health of Mr —, who had sold his ground to build him a house upon, (meaning the Theatre), and which was to be opened the next day for them all to reign in.

“THE poor ignorant enthusiastic hearers of this *Godly* preacher, found their enmity against Satan and his subjects instantly inflamed by this

* In the spring 1764.

this harangue; and in order to prevent so alarming an extension of his Infernal Majesty's empire, they hastened away in a body to the new built play-house, and set the stage on fire. Luckily the flames were extinguished, before any other part of the Theatre was consumed; but the whole of my theatrical wardrobe, which lay in the packages upon it, were destroyed." "They had cost," she says, "many many hundreds of pounds, and at that time, upon a moderate computation, were worth nine hundred; there being among them a complete set of garnets and pearls, from cap to stomacher*."

MRS BELLAMY proceeds to inform us, among other particulars, that being resolved to perform, the next day a temporary stage was erected of loose boards covered with carpets; and to equip her with a wardrobe for comedy, before six o'clock, from not being mistress of one gown, she found herself in the possession of above forty, and some of these almost new, as well as very rich. Nor did the ladies confine themselves to outward garments only. She received presents of all kinds, and from

* *Life of Mrs Bellamy*, vol. IV. p. 59, 60.

from every part of the adjacent country, together with invitations and parties for the whole time of her residence in their neighbourhood. They opened with the *Citizen* by way of a play, and the *Mock Doctor* for the farce. Mr Reddish and Mr Aicken were the principal performers with her there that season.

FROM this time the Glasgow Theatre was occupied at different periods by the Edinburgh company, till it was taken by one Williams†, an adventuring itinerant manager; who being active and enterprising for one season, cleared a considerable sum. Brown‡, the famous *Copper Captain*, engaged with him, and proved peculiarly attractive.

THE Edinburgh Theatre having been let by Mr Ross to Mr Wilkinfon of York, he brought his performers along with him: the greatest part, therefore, of the Edinburgh one, forming themselves into an independent company,

* Page 63. 64.

† He possessed it from 1768 and 1769, to the end of 1771. Digges had it 1772, 1773.

‡ That pleasant comedian died at the Saracen's Head. Mr Graham was at the expence of his funeral.

pany, fitted up a temporary Theatre at Dundee. Messrs Bland and Mills were their managers. The former had procured the lease of the house at Glasgow for the following Winter. I was always upon habits of friendship with Mr Bland; and meeting him accidentally in Edinburgh, he communicated his plan, and prevailed upon me to become one of the party, on a joint partnership with him and Mr Mills, for the season only, upon certain conditions*. Miss Mansel, then Mrs Farren, was our principal woman. The scheme succeeded, and I was thereby induced to embark in it for a permanency. Accordingly, before the close of the season, I purchased one full third of the wardrobe and moveable property†. We had agreed for a lease of a new Theatre, then building at Aberdeen; and, in the mean time, proposed taking the company, for a short time, to Dumfries. I had been there on the occasion, and slept at Kilmarnock on my return. When I arrived in the morning at the place where the Theatre had stood, I found it covered with a smoky ruin‡.

THUS

* The season commenced January 12. 1780.

† April 25.

‡ May 5.

THUS was all our theatrical property, *one-third* of which I had been in possession of only eleven days, reduced to nothing. My own stage dresses, to no inconsiderable amount, were very fortunately at my lodging, and, consequently escaped the general wreck. How the accident happened was never known. It had all the appearance of design. There had been no play, and, consequently, no fires, for two days. Nor could there have been any at the gallery-end of the house, from whence the flames first issued, as the dressing-rooms were, and, indeed, always are, contiguous to the stage*.

SOON after this unfortunate catastrophe, I applied to the proprietors, to know whether it was their design to rebuild the Theatre, or to what purpose they resolved to convert their property. I was informed, that they had not the least intention of building; and that I was at liberty, with their full consent, to erect a house, at my own risk, if I judged it advisable so to do: nay, one of the gentlemen† proposed, that if I chose to build upon the same

O spot,

* The building had been insured for L. 1000, but the premium, by some neglect, had not been paid up. The Sun Fire Office, however, very genteelly made a present of L. 300 towards the loss.

† Mr Bogle of Shettleston.

spot, I should be complimented with a present of the ground and remaining walls. I thanked him for his kind intention, but declined the offer; as I rather chose to buy ground, almost at any rate, if it could be procured, in the heart of the town. A central situation, I judged, would soon refund the difference. With this view, I purchased that part of St. Enoch's Croft which now forms one side of Dunlop Street.

THE foundation was dug, and I attended to lay the first stone*. During the ceremony I received the following card:—"Dr Gillies and Mr Porteous offer their compliments to Mr Jackson, and think it their duty candidly to inform him, before he proceed farther in the work, that they intend to join with other proprietors in Dunlop Street, to apply to the magistrates to prevent the building of a play-house, (or concert-hall for acting plays), in this Street, as being an injury to their property, and inconsistent with the dispositions granted by Mr Dunlop to the feuars†. We are

* Saturday, February 17. 1781.

† The Reverend Gentlemen grounded their objections to the Theatre's being erected on the area in question, upon the clause in the original feu from Mr Dunlop, "That it shall

are to meet with them on Tuesday forenoon; and though we might have delayed giving any intimation till the building was begun, we thought it fair, and becoming our station, to give it thus early. 17th February 1781."

I TOOK no notice of these contents to the by-standers, but laid the stone, and ordered the work to be carried on with all possible dispatch. On a re-perusal of the letter, I judged it of such a nature as to require able and serious advice. I therefore repaired instantly to Edinburgh, and consulted one of the first Advocates there. After receiving his opinion, I addressed the following answer to the two gentlemen, upon the points in question:—

Edinburgh, February 19. 1781.

REVEREND SIRS,

" I KNOW not whether I should make an apology for delaying my answer to your card, or make an excuse for the trouble I give you

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in

not be lawful to, nor in the power of the said Robert Barclay, or his forefairs, to erect any *tan-work, candle work soap-work*, nor any other *work or manufacture* whatever, upon any part of the forefairs grounds, which may be deemed a *nuisance* by the magistrates of Glasgow, or other judges competent."

in the perusal of this letter. The bearer told me it required no reply. You, perhaps, might with a tacit consent to it on your parts; but, on mine, I find it incompatible with my interest to be silent on the occasion. I should have given you a line on the receipt of your note; but, as one of the two points on which you rest your complaint is a matter of law, I could not, till I had made myself master of the subject, by the advice of a lawyer, offer my sentiments with safety on the occasion.

“ THAT your property should be injured by the building now erecting, I could in a moment have confuted; for, “ where the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.” Thus, where amusements are held forth, there the body of the people will centre. For to a family, especially when blessed with a female progeny, the vicinity to places of entertainment must be a lessening to that family’s expence; and you, I presume, are not to be told the yearly charge of coaches or chairs; nor the convenience that would attend the stepping only across the street to the necessary pleasures of the night. In London, Edinburgh, York, Bristol, and all the capital towns in the island,

island, this theory is established on proof, by the augmentation of the rents of houses, and the price of lodgings, because they are in the vicinity of the Theatre.

“YOUR second assertion, that “it is inconsistent with the disposition granted by Mr Dunlop to the feuars,” is totally groundless. For till you can prove that a Theatre is a manufacture which may be deemed a nuisance, you cannot seriously suppose the present building in dispute as coming within the meaning of Mr Dunlop. A church, a school, or a ball-room might with equal propriety be pronounced nuisances, as the building in question.

“LET me persuade you, gentlemen, to take the advice of one who has seen enough of the world to point out your prudent conduct on this occasion. Would you live in neighbourly comfort with one who has pitched his tent so near you, molest him not in the pursuit of his profession; for, believe it, he means to deport himself with the greatest deference to yours. The son of a clergyman, and brought
up

up for holy orders himself, he shall ever pay honour to the sacred characters of that order,

“ LET it be your study to preach sanctity without austerity ; for be assured, wherever compulsion or restraint accompanies admonition or advice, the senses take the alarm, and nature and reason, ever rebellious under restraint, begin to weigh and to confute the unreasonable dictates of authority ———. But I beg your pardons ; I am running on in a field too large for the bounds of a letter, in which, however, I am ready on all occasions to meet you in the lists of argument, on this point, as I am in the Parliament House, before the Lords at Edinburgh, to whom I have already appealed, on the subject of the other,

“ ON more maturely considering the subject, it appears clear to me that you do not know the plan of the intended buildings. That which you complain of will neither interrupt your sight nor offend your hearing. A land is intended to be built along the front of Dunlop Street, according to the rules of that Street, and likewise along Dr Gillies’s passage, as high as either of your houses. That next
Dr

THE SCOTTISH STAGE. 111

Dr Gillies will block up his prospect southward within ten feet of his windows. This will entirely screen him, not only from a sight of the Theatre, but from every other object that way. These lands may be either heightened or lowered, placed forward or backward, according to the good or bad humour your conduct may occasion in the proprietor.

“ SINCE writing the above, I have been reminded, that one of you (Dr Gillies) was last summer a fellow-traveller with me. We were not then disagreeable to each other : the conversation at Auchterarder will attest that circumstance. As we were fellow-travellers in a short journey, let us be so in a long one, in a journey of the world ; and let us show to each individual of that world, that brotherly love and charity are the characteristics of good christians. That it may be so with me, shall be the constant care of,

GENTLEMEN,

Your humble servant,

J. JACKSON.”

I RETURNED

I RETURNED to Glasgow on the Tuesday, with an order from one of the Lords of Session to proceed with the work, notwithstanding any interference to the contrary ; with a prohibition to all orders of men, from offering any molestation to me or my property*. Some of the heads of the town, to whom the transaction was communicated, approved of the measure I had taken ; and assured me, that if any prosecution should take place, they would enter into a subscription to defray the expences.

No interruption was however afterwards attempted : And I must do the Reverend Gentlemen the justice to declare, that, as neighbours, their conduct towards me has been becoming their stations, condescending and friendly ; and, on my side, I flatter myself, they have, on all occasions, found me accommodating and respectful.

THOSE

19th February 1781.

* " Prohibits and discharges the before mentioned Dr Gillies and Mr Porteous, and all others, from troubling or molesting the complainer in the free exercise of his property ; and to be intimidated.

(Signed) JA: BURNET."

settled, that one set of performers supplied both houses. The actors, wardrobe, and exhibitions were the same; its theatrical arrangements being upon a conjunct plan with that of the metropolis.

SECT.

S E C T. VII.

Mrs Barresford in Edinburgh—Mrs Siddons' introduction there—Consequences respecting temporary engagements—Embarrassments attending the manager therefrom—Similar circumstance to Mr Wilkinson, at Beverly.

AT the commencement of my management in Edinburgh, I took the liberty of circulating, as early as possible, the following address:—

TO THE PUBLIC.

" I DO myself the honour of seizing the earliest opportunity of informing the LADIES and GENTLEMEN of the city of Edinburgh, that the superintendence of the Theatre Royal has at length fallen to my lot. The task is always arduous ; and, in the present instance, rendered still more difficult from the shortness of the time allowed me for the necessary preparations for the season, my agreement with Mr Rofs for the purchase of the Theatre, not

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having

having been concluded till the 10th of the present month *. Even with this additional inconvenience, I embrace the situation with pleasure. Naturalized, as it were, by inclination, and a long residence in Scotland, I cannot help looking forward with a glow of satisfaction, on an appointment which flatters me with a pleasing expectation of passing the latter part of my life in a country, for which, from my earliest years, I have ever entertained the strongest attachment.

“THE difficulties I must necessarily at present encounter, shall be combated by an unremitted perseverance. As a servant of the Public, I shall think myself bound, on all occasions, to make my opinion subservient to their wishes. A predilection to representations that exhibit those moral principles that the Stage was intended to promote, and a constant endeavour to procure the most capital Performers that can be had, to fill the various characters, shall claim my first attention, in the appointment of every theatrical exhibition.

“By this line of conduct, I flatter myself
with

• November 1781.

with the hopes of sharing some part of the Public Favour. To maintain and to promote that portion of their esteem, shall be the constant and most ardent wish of

Their most humble

And devoted servant,

JOHN JACKSON."

AFTER a perusal of the above, and upon the strictest review of the various transactions that have occurred through a series of succeeding years, I cannot accuse myself of having in the smallest degree swerved from the literal meaning, or the spirit of the obligation I then entered into with my supporters, the Public ; whose servant, then, and at all times since, I have professed myself to be. If, after their acquaintance with the facts herein produced, I should be deemed to have been deficient either in my industry, or my duty, I shall tacitly submit to the general censure ; for on this, as on every former occasion, it is my pleasure, and my wish, to bow to the public voice.

ON a revision of the following names, selected from the numerous catalogues of others

thers now before me, I cannot entertain the smallest suspicion of being accused of not having exerted my *constant endeavours to procure the most capital performers that could be bad.*

✓ Mr Henderfon,	Mrs Yates,
✓ King,	Crawford,
✓ Yates,	Siddons, <i>three times,</i>
Holman,	Jordan, <i>three times,</i>
Pope,	Eften, <i>twice,</i>
Clinch,	Miss Farren,
* Johnson,	George, <i>twice,</i>
* Gaudry,	Morris,
* Oreilly,	M. Farren,
* Ryder,	Fontenelle,
Wilson,	* Mrs Baddeley,
Leoni.	Cornellys,
	Brooks,
	Robinson,
	Kennedy, <i>the singer,</i>
	Barresford.

MRS BARRESFORD, though last, is not the least in our esteem. As a *residential actress*,
I think

Those marked thus * are dead.

I think I may venture to use the *Great Master-Poet's* expression,

“ ————— Take her for all in all,
“ I shall not look upon her like again.”

SHE was the daughter of Mr Wilford, brother-in-law to Mr Rich (the celebrated *Linn*) patentee of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden. Mr Rich's country house was at Cowley, near Uxbridge, where I used to be upon a visit for weeks together. It was there I first saw Miss Wilford. She was then about fourteen or fifteen years of age, possessed of an elegant figure, and had every advantage of education to render her accomplishments complete. I was present at her first exhibition as a dancer, in which she excelled. She appeared as an actress in *Miranda*, in the *Busy Body*, the same season; afterwards filled a capital line of characters for many years in Covent Garden: She was the original *Miss Hardcastle*, in Dr Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. She graced this Theatre six winters. Her *Lady Racket* will be remembered as long as one of the present Edinburgh audience remains alive: And in *Lady Grace*, in the Journey to London, she displayed such a neatness of elegance, that she must have been allowed

an

lowed by all to have *moved* and *looked* the very character she represented.

AMONG the various transactions during the last ten years that have occurred, the first in the routine of notice, is the introduction of Mrs Siddons to the Edinburgh stage, a circumstance certainly one of the most material of that period. This occurrence I had looked forward to, with the most flattering hopes of pleasure and advantage ; to promote it, I had taken a journey on purpose to Dublin, during Mrs Siddons' performance in that city ; and made other suitable efforts to induce her to pay a visit to the Theatre of this metropolis.

THE first appearance of that lady upon this stage, was upon Saturday May 22. 1784, in the part of *Belvidera*, in the play of *Venice Preserv'd*.

THE public expectation was wonderfully heightened, and abundantly gratified. As a spectator, I was pleased also ; as a manager, I fear I have found no great cause to rejoice. For I am not clear, notwithstanding the large receipts

ceipts on that occasion, that I ultimately experienced much profit.

THIS must have the appearance of a *strong assertion* to those of my readers, into whose ears it has been loudly and constantly trumpeted, that the manager had made mountains of money by Mrs Siddons' performance. Let us proceed to the discussion of that question, pointed out by the finger of experience and proof.

THE introduction of exotics, for a short period, at any Theatre out of London, must be attended with inconveniènces to a manager, in a greater or a less degree, according to local circumstances, or the temper of the times. For though the wishes of the audience may be thereby gratified to the uttermost, and the spirit and exertions of the manager for a moment extolled; yet the hour of reflection soon returns to the latter, and satiety and lassitude pervades the town. The best selected pieces, most respectably cast, are represented to empty benches; and the hundreds that have been taken in a week, by the attraction of merit or fashion, are thus expended in support

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port of an expensive company, through the remainder of a long and dragging season.

OR should the object not have proved productive, which, however high in estimation, I have sometimes known to happen, the manager then becomes subject to a double loss, and the deficiency must be made up from some other funds.

AT Bath, no actor or actress, however popular or attractive, is permitted to perform for a few nights only. On no other conditions can they be engaged there, but for the season; and upon such terms as the emoluments of the Theatre may warrant, so as to coincide with the manager's advantage. "No acting there," says Mr Wilkinson, "for a short period, to take the cream and leave the skimmed milk for the manager and performers to live upon*."

nav MRS CRAWFORD, who resided in that city the greatest part of a winter, but a few years ago †, could procure no temporary access to the Theatre. Proposals were made to her, but

* *Mirror, or Actors Tablet, by Wilkinson*, p. 96. † An. 1789.

but expressly that she should engage for the season. That capital actress, therefore, declining all offers upon that plan, continued there, to the great loss of the audience as well as herself, without having an opportunity of exhibiting her justly admired theatrical talents.

THE same maxim prevailed with the York company, till the accession of Mr Wilkinson, the present manager, who judged it advisable to deviate from the long adopted mode.

“WHICH rule,” he says, “had I abided by, those stages (York and Hull) had been on a more solid foundation than at the present day*.”

HIS reasons for this assertion, I shall insert in his own words. “The absence of the reigning London favourite, leaves a cold chill and ominous ill-fated blast, on all theatrical culture for the year to come. It is true, by these advantages, plays are wonderfully altered for the better; but was I asked, if in consequence of such good fare, are not the audi-

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* *Mirror*, p. 95.

ences altered for the better also? I should be compelled to answer, Indeed they are not; but far the contrary. Frequently seeing the best acting, has destroyed all theatrical regular relish. I was led formerly to believe, when I first began the mode of procuring principal performers from London, it would have given information to the people in general, and made more and more converts to my conventicles; but there I was egregiously mistaken. For people who are not blessed with affluent fortunes, in the middling class of life, with proud minds and little souls, have but as much for pleasure as they can conveniently spare; therefore, if they expend in one week what would serve for a month, for themselves and their families purposes, there is likely to be a drawback. And it is surprising my own appetite did not inform me this; for if I fed one week upon pine-apples, grapes, nectarines, and peaches, I would rather go without the week following, than eat common pears, plumbs, or blackberries*.”

I AM far from insinuating, that the effects of these temporary theatrical visitors so strongly predominate in the scale of disadvantage

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* *Mirror*, p. 98.

to an Edinburgh manager, as to those of York, Hull, or even of Bath. The less numerous the audiences, the more vulnerable are the directors of their amusements.

INCONVENIENCES, however, obviously do arise here. Observation before, and experience since I made the trial, have furnished me with conviction. But there is no suspending the practice; it has been begun, and must be continued. The efforts of the actors, and the liberality of the audience, in the intervening chasms, can only modify and correct it.

LUCRATIVE motives apart—The dearth of stage pieces which these periodical performances naturally occasion, proves a lasting drawback upon the greatest temporary advantage they can produce.

MRS SIDDONS' cast is *Isabella*, *Belvidera*, *Lady Randolph*, and all in that line. Mrs Jordan's the *Country Girl*, the *Miss Hoydens*, and sprightly comedy. Thus, if those ladies are seen in *twelve* characters each, it proves the occasion of *twenty-four* plays being laid upon the shelf. For so attractive have they been found in those particular performances, in which they are allowed chiefly to excel,

excel, that it would be next to an impossibility for the best *annual actresses* that could be procured, to support the situation of either, in the smallest degree of comparison; or to preserve the pieces in which they had so recently appeared upon the *acting stock list* of the season.

Sid BUT let us examine in what manner Mrs Siddons' first visit to Edinburgh operated merely upon the receipts of the Theatre. As this is a circumstance that has been much talked of, and, among others, for want of explanation, perhaps little understood, I am desired by a person of some consequence to be particular in its discussion.

THE fame which Mrs Siddons had acquired in London was not long in travelling thus far north, and soon excited in the *amateurs* of the drama a wish to see her upon the Theatre; and I, on this, as well as on other occasions, was anxious they should be gratified. A leading person in the Parliament House, discoursing with me upon the subject, proposed, that if she could be prevailed upon to come down, I should be assisted, for that purpose, with the sum of L.200, to be raised by subscription, and which was to be paid

paid to me in part of whatever sum should be stipulated for her performance, and I was recommended to make the best bargain I could.

IN consequence of this assurance, I concluded an agreement with her husband, that Mrs Siddons should perform nine nights, for which she was to receive L.400, and a *clear* benefit. A few posts after*, I was desired by Mr Siddons to inform him, if the two hundred pounds subscription of the nobility and gentry was to go "towards the four hundred I was to give her."

I REPLIED in return†, that "a set of gentlemen, in order to put it in my power to offer Mrs Siddons what might be judged worth her acceptance, had undertaken to raise me L. 200, which, added to the L. 200 I proposed to give, made up the L. 400.

I SOON received for answer, that Mrs Siddons did not chuse to perform upon any stipulated sum, but rather preferred the taking her chance

* London, February 3. † Edinburgh, February 9. 1784.

chance of the receipts, and supposed I should have no objection to the change. I had now no choice ; the dye was cast ; the negociation had taken wind, and had I put a negative upon the business, let my reasons have been ever so good, the blame must have fallen upon me. And therefore, after some deliberation, I thought it advisable to consent to the change.

A LETTER from Mr Siddons* concluded the second agreement, with which he declared, that " he and Mrs Siddons were extremely satisfied with all my treaty, and obliged to me for joining so readily with their last proposals."

THE alteration was, that instead of L.400 certain, Mrs Siddons should receive half of the receipts after the expences ; with also a clear benefit. I mentioned the circumstance to the conductor of the subscription ; and expressed my apprehension of its operating very strongly in my disfavour.

WITH respect to the two hundred pounds, I expected at any rate to have had the satisfaction

* April 3.

faction of paying it ; and, for that purpose had a promise that the money should be lodged in my hands. But, by what means I know not, Mr Siddons received it without my knowledge or participation. This of course made a balance of L.200 in the scale of profit in Mrs Siddons' favour, over and above what accrued from the receipts of the house.

HER receipts then stood thus :—

Nine nights receipts,	-	L.467	7	7
From the gentlemens subscription,	200	0	0	
Benefit (<i>clear</i>) at raised prices, I presume may be rated at	-	180	0	0
Presents by plate and gold tickets,				
I suppose could not amount to less than	-	120	0	0
		<hr/>		
		L. 967	7	7

The expences of Mrs Siddons' journey were all that could be placed on the debtor side of the accompt ; for her living in Edinburgh would scarcely exceed what it would have cost her in Gower Street—

We shall rate them then at	50	0	0
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	L.917	7	7

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THUS, then, Mrs Siddons sat down at her fire-side with a clear nine hundred and odd pounds, for nine nights performance.

LET us now examine into the profits of the manager.

Half of the receipts, after paying the expences, divided with Mrs Siddons,	L.467 7 7
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Against this must be placed his journey to Dublin, and other extra expences, necessarily incurred on the occasion, exceeding	- L.50 0 0
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Mrs Siddons played for the benefit of the Infirmary, and gave her <i>labour gratis</i> . The manager gave an equal share of the profits of the night, and withal the charges which he paid to the company,	- 35 0 0
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Mrs Siddons had a clear benefit also, which was to the manager,	35 0 0
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	L.120 0 0
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Thus the manager's clearance was L.347 7 7

AND

AND how soon will a continuance of loss amount to that sum, in an undertaking like that of Edinburgh, with a deficiency of fifty pounds a-week, as I have often experienced, with an excellent company, when the town, from satiety, or any other cause, falls into a disinclination to visit the Theatre?

It may here perhaps be presumed, that some value should be placed to the profit side of the manager's accompt, from a supposed overcharge in the L. 35, as the nightly expence of the house. To this I shall offer in reply, that there are extra charges that may properly be stiled the sinking funds of a Theatre, which the disinterested spectator can have no conception of; which an individual performer is little acquainted with, and which the manager, who feels their weight upon the pay-day, can alone explain: so that avaraging the yearly expences by the number of acting nights, the medium charge, *communibus annis*, may be fairly rated at nearer L. 40 than L. 35 a night.

I SHALL have occasion to speak more at large upon the weekly expences of 1790, to that the reader is requested to refer, or to re-

main satisfied with this general statement till he arrives there in due course.

I CANNOT defer this page without observing, that in London the expences of benefit nights have been in my memory considerably heightened. When I engaged in Drury Lane, the charges were *sixty guineas* ; which I paid three seasons. I afterwards paid *an hundred* for five years : and since that, they have been augmented, (I believe) to *an hundred and twenty* or upwards. In Edinburgh, on the building of the present Theatre Royal, L. 35 was adopted as a reasonable price for a benefit (1769) and it has remained, as the standard, notwithstanding the growing increase of every article of expence since that period. I have often heard Mr Garrick and Mr Lacy complain that they lost considerably by the benefits being charged so low ; and I can safely aver, that, considering the drawbacks they are saddled with, the case has been the same with me.

CLEAR benefits, as they are called, are free from every expence, not only from actors salaries, but likewise from lights, printing, servants,

vants, and a long list of appendages. There are not only obviously attended with disadvantage, but sometimes with great temporary inconvenience to the manager, as they often occasion an ill-timed vacancy in the funds of the week. So sensible of this were Mr King, Miss Farren, Mrs Pope, and Mrs Esten, that in return, they made a voluntary compliment of their performance for Mrs Jackson, which threw something in, towards the pecuniary balance in my favour.

THE L. 200 subscription not only rendered the inequality of emolument between the two parties so great, but was attended with such inconveniencies in other respects, as will, I presume, dissuade the gentlemen from adopting a similar measure on any future occasion. Many of the members, upon the strength of their subscription, entertained an idea, that they were intitled to a preference of places in the boxes; and claimed, in consequence, a right of opinion in the disposal of them.

UNDER this supposition, a general meeting was called, at the instance of one of the members, by public advertisement. A large attendance

tendance was procured ; and the business fully discussed. It was determined that the subscribers should have no claim individually upon the boxes : That their wives and relatives, in that part of the house, should take the general chance : And that for themselves personally, a certain number of rows in the pit should be set apart, with the privilege of entering thereto, a quarter of an hour before the other doors were opened.

VARIOUS modes were proposed with respect to the arrangement of the boxes, but none of them adopted. It was at length finally resolved, that the disposal of them should be left to the discretion of the manager.

THIS, however it might appear at the moment, proved a service of danger. Notwithstanding every precaution, mistakes unavoidably happened. If the clerk inserted a name by a wrong designation—if a letter miscarried, or a servant arrived too late to secure the places—the whole blame centered with the manager. Even an inability to comply with a demand, was imputed to him as a fault.

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My not being able to perform an impossibility, or rather, my refusal to do an act of injustice, by erasing a name, gave unpardonable offence to an individual, who, strange as it may appear, threatened me at the time with the effects of his resentment ; and he kept his word. If he was not the cause, soon after, of the opposition to the renewal of the patent, he was at least instrumental, to the uttermost of his power, in keeping up the contention.

I STAND not however alone, I find, in having thus undeservedly incurred the frowns of resentment. A brother-manager suffered considerably on a similar occasion, from an unmerited animosity, taken wantonly up by a person in power.

“ THE cause (says Mr Wilkinfon) of my losing the little jewel Beverly, from the crown of my York imperial diadem, I shall here faithfully relate. I was up to the ears in building a new Theatre at Leeds, and in the interim tried Beverly and Hull races: At that time my lease for the former was nearly expired: When to my astonishment, and every persons

persons equal surprize, I was ordered by Colonel Appleton, then mayor, to march bag and baggage out of the town. My royalty of patents, with York in one hand, and that of Hull in the other, could not melt nor soften an obdurate rock, or prevail with that upright judge to deviate so far, as to wink at a breach of law, by suffering a naughty play at Beverly, though he had evidently gone nine miles from hence to Hull, for the purpose of seeing one, at which time Hull was not a patent Theatre.

“ WHY a gentleman whom I never to my knowlege offended, but held in respectful esteem, should have used me thus oppressively, has been from that time to this inexplicable, unless the following circumstance was his ground motive and reason for such ungentlemanlike, and indeed such cruel behaviour; which surely can only be accounted for as owing to that strange turn, too often seen, felt and experienced from a despotic and proud disposition.

“ Two years before, the said Colonel had desired to have a row in a stage box for my benefit at Hull. The places were set down,
but

but the Colonel had not, as was, and is the usage, sent a servant to secure them ; and it was, and is also the custom, that at the end of the first act of a play, none can be kept for any rank or degree whatever. The Colonel did not arrive till the second act was performing, consequently his seats were filled up ; and though the ladies and gentlemen in the boxes offered to make him every convenience, he would not accept it, but was highly enraged and offended, at what, in fact, was entirely his own fault. He declared he would not continue a minute longer in the Theatre, and departed instantly, swelling with dignity even to the bursting, and vowing vengeance on the Wilkinfon. The which he put in execution in the manner I have related : And it has often brought good, Shakespear's lines, as applicable to that powerful magistrate—”

“ ———— Oh ! 'tis excellent

“ To have a giant's strength ! but it is tyrannous

“ To use it like a giant.”

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S E C T.

S E C T. VIII.

Renewal of the Patent—Transactions concerning it—The rights of the Lord Chamberlain of England, respecting theatrical representations—Impartiality of the Duke of Grafton, in that office—Mrs Siddons again in Edinburgh—Mr Fennell there.

I WAS affected with no small degree of surprise, when I understood that a number of gentlemen were meditating to procure a new patent, in their own names, for the Edinburgh Theatre, upon the expiration of the one then existing. I imagined the failure of the same scheme, in the hands of men of the first character and abilities in the kingdom *, would have banished every idea of repeating the experiment.

A PROPOSAL was, however, transmitted to London, to be laid before the Lord Chamberlain

* See pages 30, 23.

lain for that purpose. It took no notice of *the present Theatre Royal, of the proprietors, subscribers to it, or of Mr Jackson the patentee*. It contained *three capital mistakes* in point of fact, and held out a *principle* exploded in the history and practice of all the Theatres in the kingdom.

THE *first* of these mistakes was, that David Ross, upon the erection of the Theatre Royal, had been generously entrusted with the management by the public, without any valuable consideration upon his part *.

2dly, THAT Mr Ross had betrayed his trust, by converting it into a quiet sinecure-office of L. 500 *per annum* to himself †.

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3dly, THAT Mr Jackson had paid no valuable consideration to Mr Ross for a conveyance of the Theatre ‡.

4thly, THAT

* The high price paid for the Theatre by Mr Ross, confutes this assertion, see page 75.

† This is likewise explained in page 75.

‡ The contrary of this very evidently appears in page 76. See likewise farther particulars in the section of the year 1790.

4thly, THAT upon the expiration of theatrical patents, the obtaining the next term was a matter of interest alone, and that the Lord Chamberlain of England was accustomed to grant new patents, without the least regard to the property of the subsisting Theatres, or the persons concerned in them.

HAVING got notice of these proposals, I made specific objections to them, in which I explained the mistake respecting Mr Ross and myself. I also endeavoured to correct the error with regard to the nature of theatrical property, and to point out the more just and equitable practice of the Lord Chamberlain in the renovation of patents.

IN order to illucidate this, I took the liberty of observing, that, with great deference to the gentlemen concerned, the then scheme appeared to be founded upon a great *classical error*; or, in other words, a total forgetfulness of the present age and country. In Greece and Rome, the public furnished magnificent Theatres, with all their splendid decorations. The public, therefore, had an unquestionable right to the exclusive choice or nomination
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of every person concerned in the conduct of these national spectacles.

BUT where they are provided by individuals, those individuals have an undoubted right to the direction of them, guaranteed by those laws, and that government under which they live, and to which they are amenable.

THE intention, I reminded them, of the legislature, by the statute made in behalf of Theatres, was not to alter the nature of theatrical property, but to protect the church and the state from the petulance and abuse which had crept into the representations of the stage; and, that so long as managers and proprietors conducted the entertainments with proper decorum, it had been the equitable practice of the Lord Chamberlain of England to renew patents from time to time *to the possessors of the property*. It is this equitable right of renewal, which constitutes the theatrical property of Great Britain, and which without it would be of no value. The Theatres of London were sold, a few years ago, for the great sums of L.64,000 and L.70,000 Sterling,
and

and that at a time when the term of one of the patents of those houses was within a few years of expiring*.

THE *scenery, wardrobe, and brick-walls*, fold or separated from the *use* which they served for upon the spot, would not have brought a sixth part of that sum, and no man would hazard his money upon such an adventure, were not the right of renewal so secured by the laws of his country,

THE Theatres of *Bath, Norwich, Chester, Hull, York, Liverpool, &c. &c.* are all upon the very same footing as that of Edinburgh. They are all *properties* growing in proportion to their respective situations, and the *patents have been regularly renewed to their respective proprietors.*

PUBLIC licences to Theatres all over Europe, are intended, and used for no other purposes, than to ensure the observance of propriety and

* The value of the London Theatres in the beginning of this century, did not exceed L. 5000. They arose to L. 12,000, then to L. 20,000, and so on, till they have arrived to L. 70,000 and upwards.

and decorum in the conduct of the stage. In England the holding Theatres under the high jurisdiction to which they are by law subjected, is of more importance than in other kingdoms, where the press is also under controul, because the measure operates as a check upon authors* more than actors. With regard to the latter, the powers vested by the act of Parliament have improved the property of the stage, and insured the bread of such managers as chose to behave with propriety, and to avoid every occasion of giving offence. The compliment paid to the Duke of Grafton, Lord Chamberlain, by Mr Colley Cibber, at the time the law passed, may with justice be continued to his successors. "It is evident," says Cibber, "that the power of that white staff, ever since it has been in the illustrious hand that now holds it, has been used with the utmost lenity.†"

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* A licentious writer, whose pieces were exhibited in the Hay Market, was the occasion of the act of Parliament: Sir Robert Walpole was the chief mark of his satire: "But," as Cibber says, in his Apology, p. 164, "he went on knocking down all distinctions, religion, laws, government, priests, judges, and ministers."

Gustavus Vasa by Brook, and the Eleanora of Thomson, were the two first pieces prohibited in virtue of the act.

† *Cibber's Life*, c. 10. p. 206.

THESE arguments, fraught with instances uncontravertable, could not fail to operate on disinterested and unprejudiced minds effectually in my favour. One of the principal members of the association, on making the necessary enquiries on that occasion at the Lord Chamberlain's office, not only declined the business altogether, but gave his opinion decidedly against those with whom he had acted ; declaring, that the patent and the property must go together ; and that if the gentlemen persisted in their intention of being concerned in the direction of the Theatre, they must begin with an act of justice ; which could only be by a compromise with me, or a purchase of my theatrical rights.

THE length of time became at last the sole object of debate. Sir Adam Ferguson, who at that time was member for the city of Edinburgh, and, as such, in some measure concerned, proposed, that the renewal should be in my own name, but for *ten* years only. This I refused, for two very obvious reasons. First, because I must thereby have incurred more than double the expence, as it would have required two renewals instead of one : And, in the next place,

place, as I deemed myself justly entitled to the usual grant of twenty-one years. Nor was it probable the Lord Chamberlain would have consented to the proposal, as it would have been a direct infringement of the custom of the office; twenty-one years being the constant and established period for the renovation of theatrical patents.

MR WALTER ROSS, who had an interest in the success of my application, and with whom I was in the closest ties of friendship, was not only desirous to bring the business to a speedy conclusion, but anxiously wished likewise to effect it with the approbation of all; that a cordial unanimity might be the result. 207

He therefore suggested to me, that I should make a proposal to the Duke of Hamilton, who then honoured me with his patronage, and to Mr Dundas, to have the patent taken out in their joint names; a measure which, he presumed, would be the means of silencing the few persevering opponents; and by which, he assured me, I could suffer no diminution of right. I had likewise in this instance an

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immediate precedent; the first patent which I purchased from Mr Ross having been taken out in the name of Henry Davidson, Esq.

To this I assented ; making a personal request to the Duke and Mr Dundas, that they would be pleased to hold the patent in their names ; to which they favoured me with their immediate condescension.

I THEREUPON executed a deed of reservation with respect to the rights of the subscribers ; and also addressed a letter of approbation to the Lord Chamberlain. I gave instructions likewise to Mr Seton, my solicitor, to discharge the fees of office, which was accordingly done ; and the patent consequently taken out in the names of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, and the Right Honourable Mr Dundas.

THAT season closed ; the next passed away in harmony, peace, and profit ; and at no period were my prospects of advantage fairer, or my hopes of prosperity wound up to a higher

higher pitch, than at the commencement of the summer 1788. I may safely say,

" 'Twas not in mortals to command success,"

But every mode was practised to deserve it.

BESIDES the first female luminary of the age, I had retained also a local favourite. Mr Fennell, who had appeared in the principal tragedy parts during the winter, was prevailed upon to continue in Scotland, purposely as a counterpart to Mrs Siddons. Several new pieces were in readiness, and such preparations made, as in all probability must have ensured a most brilliant season. But, alas ! who can controul his fate ? The Demon of Discord broke in upon our repose, confounded our operations, and rendered nugatory our most earnest endeavours.

AN offence was taken by some gentlemen at an expression imprudently uttered by Mr Fennell, which, like a spark among combustibles, pervaded the minds of the audience, and attracted the attention of the town.

THE result was, the ruin of Mr Fennell ;
and

and proved to the manager, not only a considerable pecuniary loss, but the means likewise, of affixing upon him undeserved blame, for supposed incidents in that transaction, that never existed, or in which he never in any shape interfered. For,

“ Slander will leave spots, where malice finds none.”

As I am now unavoidably brought forward, with respect to the theatrical events of my management in general, at the particular request of some of my nearest friends, I am persuaded to subjoin a recital of that part of the business of *eighty-eight*, in which I was personally concerned.

SECT.

S E C T. IX.

Mr Fennell in Edinburgh—Disputes with the audience—The manager's conduct on the occasion—Observations respecting the parts of Pierre and Jaffier—Garrick, Barry, and Mossop, in those characters—Their different powers—The manager's general arrangement of characters—Provincial Theatres more liable to disputes respecting performers than those of London—Anonymous letter—Its effects—The manager's apology—Mr Fennell's dismissal—Consequences to the manager—Reflections thereon—His own vindication.

TOWARDS the close of the season, (1787) Mr Fennell, without any introduction or recommendation but his own appearance and report, became known to me. I gave him a hearing ; and finding in him a stronger dawn of theatrical merit, than in any young dramatic candidate I had seen since I became manager, I instantly appointed him a trial.

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THE audience approved of him; and from their approbation, I entered into an engagement with him for the next season, under the penalty of two hundred pounds. He went upon a visit to some friends in London, where he was introduced to Mr Harris, who entertaining the same idea of his abilities with myself, immediately brought him forward in the character of *Othello*, in the Theatre Royal of Covent Garden, where his theatrical merit received the public sanction. He afterwards performed *Alexander*, *Jaffier*, and *Macbeth*.

IN *Jaffier*, the only part I saw him in there, he was received with universal marks of approbation and applause: and, I must confess, it was no small satisfaction to me, that Scotland had been his nursery, and that I should have had the honour of rearing the plant.

THE two hundred pounds penalty was offered me, and any larger sum I should think reasonable, by way of damages, provided I would give up his article. I, on the part of the Public of Edinburgh, and myself, declined the proposal; and Mr Fennell, on his part, had more honour than to break an engagement,

ment, once entered into, however disadvantageous to his own views his adhering to it might have proved.

MR FENNELL continued the winter with me in Edinburgh; and I must do him the justice to say, that he attended to his business, in every instance, with the nicest punctuality. He was never absent at *one* rehearsal; and cheerfully undertook, at the shortest notice, every part assigned to him.

MRS SIDDONS having been engaged here for the summer, I prevailed upon Mr Fennell to stay in Scotland till after the races; and though Mrs Siddons' arrival, from the illness of her son, was delayed a month longer than Mr Fennell expected, he still, without reluctance, continued in Edinburgh, and undertook many laborious new parts, in the different plays that were *intended* to have been performed.

I AM thus particular in respect to Mr Fennell's behaviour antecedent to this dispute, in order to explain my conduct towards him; and to remove, or rather justify the charge of
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partiality, or favouritism, of which I had been accused.

PARTIALITY, I presume, may be praiseworthy, as well as censurable. I attempted to cherish the stage abilities I saw in Mr Fennell; and in this I surely stept not out of the line of my duty. It is a manager's business to search for, and to encourage rising merit, wherever it exists; and whenever the same theatrical abilities shall stand forward to my knowledge, they shall receive the like partiality from me to introduce them to public notice.

IN casting the play of *Venice Preserv'd*, I gave the part of *Jaffier* to Mr Fennell, and that of *Pierre* to Mr Woods; as being, in my opinion, after very mature deliberation, the only way, as my company then stood, the two characters could most properly be arranged.

ON my arrival from London, I was informed that Mr Bland had, at Mr Fennell's request, told Mr Woods, that if he desired it, he was willing to change parts, provided the manager consented. This Mr Woods declined,

ed. Mr Fennell, in relating the circumstance to me, declared, that though he had performed the one, and the other was quite new to him, he had no objection to the change.

THOUGH the alteration was against my own judgment, as I thought the parts stood best as they were, yet the morning before the rehearsal, eight days previous to the play's being performed, and indeed it might have been put off eight days longer, I told Mr Woods, that, "not having the most distant intention of giving him uneasiness, if he had the least wish to perform *Jaffier*, in preference to *Pierre*, I knew Mr Fennell had no objection to the latter; and that before the play was rehearsed, I would, if he pleased, reverse the parts." He replied, "That, as he had studied the character, he would play it."

THE tragedy of Venice Preserv'd was therefore advertised for representation, as originally cast*.

FROM this circumstance arose a contention, that was attended with very serious consequences.

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* Wednesday, July 9. 1788.

sequences. The progress of the dispute, the three nights it lasted, till it ended in a very disagreeable affray, I shall pass over in silence; a minute detail of those facts, by Mr Fennell, having been laid before the public.

AN anonymous letter, in a very illiberal stile*, gave me the first intimation of a pre-meditated scheme to disturb the performance of that evening. The cause assigned was, that Mr Woods had performed the character of *Jaffier*, and, for that reason, Mr Fennell should not be permitted to proceed in the part.

THE purport of this letter appeared to me the more singular, as Mr Fennell had repeatedly performed the character the preceding winter in Edinburgh, and afterwards in London, as I before observed, with the greatest applause; and undoubtedly, with respect to personal accomplishments, was the actor, of all others then in Scotland, who could best figure with Mrs Siddons; and who, without laying any violent restraint upon our ideas, might justly be supposed to have

“ ———— dash'd the saucy waves,

“ That throng'd and press'd to rob him of his prize.”

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* Vide Appendix, No. VIII.

I CONSIDERED the character of *Jaffier* likewise more in Mr Fennell's mode of acting, than that of *Pierre*, though I knew he differed with me in opinion on that point. The part of *Pierre*, too, being in that line of playing in which Mr Woods is generally allowed to excel, I deemed him the only person in my company to fill that character with propriety.

Pierre and *Jaffier*, in the estimation of the theatrical world, are equal in rank, and excel each other in representation only, as the particular talents of the actor elevate or lessen in the idea of the spectator, the importance of which-ever part he assumes. I have seen Garrick and Barry alternately in both parts, and the candid critic was doubtful where to bestow the preference.

MR MOSSOP, indeed, raised the character of *Pierre* beyond all reach, and left any *Jaffier* I ever saw with him at a distance: But, had he attempted *Jaffier*, I am confident he would, with Barry in *Pierre*, have stood far behind.

I MENTION these circumstances, I presume, not improperly, as I thereby only mean to

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shew,

shew, that in the distribution of the characters, I was not inattentive to the abilities of each performer; and assigned the parts impartially, and with no other view than the general advantage of the evening's performance.

I CANNOT help here expressing my surprise, at the impolicy of any individual, or set of individuals, who would wish to obtrude themselves upon the public, as censors to the Theatre, to begin their improvements by the creation or adoption of a rule that must prove of the most fatal tendency to the audience, as well as the manager.

THE appropriation of parts to particular actors, would at once efface the force of novelty from the performances; and render nugatory the efforts of a manager either to strengthen his exhibitions by a variation of character, or an introduction of any new face.

IN vain might Messrs King and Holman be brought down from London, with great pains and expence by the manager, if the performers in each of their lines were to be asked per-

permission for them to appear in their favourite characters. One residentiary actor being in possession of the enfeebled fops, and another of the lovers in tragedy, *Lord Ogleby* would be precluded by the one, and *Romeo* by the other.

THE propagating a belief of the mere existence of such a theatrical custom, must certainly be highly interesting to any individual performer, who, having gained an establishment in this or any other city, at a distance from the metropolis of England, might find it accord with his views of settlement, to have it thought a branch of the theatrical system, that parts having been once played, and therefore possessed (as he would term it) by one, cannot be taken away by the manager, and given to another, without a breach of the fundamental laws of the Theatre.

How a custom of this kind, once established, would operate with respect to the manager, we have in part observed. It is necessary, however, we should descend a little to the minutæ of its effects.

SHOULD

SHOULD the maxim above mentioned be adopted, the having a numerous and strong, or a weak and thin company, would be equally the same: The expence of half a dozen large salaries, would be an unnecessary burden upon the manager; and the engaging a good or a bad company must be of equal tendency to the public.

If the part of *Richard* alone is to be attended to, and of six respectable actors belonging to the company, one only is to be the hero of the play, and the other five, in consequence of having once played the first character in the piece, are to be indulged with the pleasure of sitting still; what is to become of *King Henry*, *Buckingham*, *Richmond*, and even *Trevel*? they must, of course, be filled up by walking gentlemen and message-bearers, and their places again supplied by scene-shifters and mutes; while the GREAT ACTORS of the company, in the upper boxes, are lookers on; and stand forward among the foremost, to ridicule the industrious underlings, who are using their best endeavours to struggle through the parts for which they are unfit. This practice, once acceded to, how far

far might not its mischievous effects be extended?

AN actor, who had formerly played the *Ghost*, having, a few seasons ago, at a provincial Theatre, performed the part of *Hamlet*, when the company returned to the headquarters at Edinburgh, and the play of *Hamlet* was ordered into rehearsal, the country *Hamlet* sent in, as an excuse for his non-attendance, that having once acted the part of *Hamlet*, he could not possibly think of demeaning himself so far, as to appear again in the *Ghost*. Let the reader figure to himself the embarrassment of a manager, on receiving five other remonstrances almost at the same time, and much to the same purport. *Horatio* had performed *Hamlet* at Aberdeen, the *King* at Montrose, *Laertes* at Dundee, *Ostrick* at Perth, and the *Player King* at Stirling. They are inexorable full of the same importance; one and all, with one voice, cry out, *Hamlet*, or nothing!

WHAT is the manager to do in this case? he must either lay poor *Hamlet* on the shelf, or dress up some of his attendants and lamp-lighters

lighters to fill up the characters in one of Shakespear's first plays ; or be reduced to the necessity of adopting Mr Foote's mode of creating actors, by filling up the deficiency with a number of paste-board figures ; which would not perhaps be esteemed a very pleasing expedient by the audience of Edinburgh.

FAR-STRAINED as this anecdote may appear, as supposed perhaps to have been adduced only for the sake of argument, I here declare, the first season I was manager in Edinburgh, I had six *Hamlets* in my company ; but from the above very nice punctilio of not descending to an inferiour part, I was compelled to lay aside the play for want of performers that whole winter.

PARTICULAR agreements had been made by my predecessor, and I was at that period obliged to comply.

THE pernicious tendency of this system at the commencement of my first managerial campaign in this Theatre, shewed me at once the baneful effects it must ever be attended with,

with, both to the audience and the manager : And from that moment its existence on the Edinburgh stage was exploded.

FOR these ten years it has been a declared and avowed rule of this Theatre, that when a performer of supposed superior merit makes his appearance, those in his line are to give way ; a general alteration in the cast of characters consequently takes place, according to the situation of the company ; and however an individual performer may be displeased at the change, his feelings must necessarily yield to the accommodation of the whole.

LET me not on this point be misunderstood. I would not have it supposed that when a new performer appears in the part of *Othello*, I could possibly propose the actor who played it before should descend into a silent senator. There is a line beyond which no impartial or prudent manager will step. In the changing *Jaffier* for *Pierre* (as in the present instance) *Brutus* for *Mark Antony* or *Cassius*, *Castalio* for *Chamont* or *Polydore*, &c. &c. the actor can suffer no diminution of rank. In secondary parts likewise, where it is neces-

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sary

fary for carrying on, or more properly arranging the business, the useful performers may be removed or changed on any emergency, without degradation as to situations or consequence. By drawing steadily and amicably together only, can a strong company render a performance respectable, be of utility to a manager, and afford satisfaction to an applauding public.

FOR the above motives the same custom was established in the two Theatres in London: And it is now no unusual thing in the bills, to see an almost total new arrangement of characters by the same performers, and in the same pieces, that have been differently represented for seasons before.

It appears to me a most strange and improbable idea, that any man, or set of men, coming to the Theatre, with a play-bill in their hands, should be induced by the mere motives that can actuate any part of an unbiassed audience, to call out to a manager for a reversal of the characters so specified in the bills of the day.

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AN unprejudiced public, who visit a theatre with an intention to be pleased, will not lightly adopt any hasty and violent measures, either in maltreating an actor who is exerting his best endeavours to afford them pleasure, or in forcibly deranging the regulations adopted by a manager, who is anxiously and unremittingly labouring in their service.

SOME secret stimulation, or sinister motive, must actuate the bosom of him, who can be induced to step forward in so singular a manner, as to retard a performance, and break in upon the peace of the house, without a very glaring piece of offence on the side of the performer, or some flagrant, unpopular and persevering misconduct of the manager. I speak this not from theory, my opinion is grounded upon practice and theatrical experience, which has not been small, or of a short duration.

So early as the year fifty-seven, I was introduced to, and was for several years the intimate acquaintance of Mr Rich. I was an admitted friend of the family on all occasions; and being permitted to become a party in

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the conversations of the manager with the first actors of the day, I had consequently no small opportunity of being early initiated into the mysteries of the interior politics of the stage.

I WAS at that period favoured with the freedom of the Theatre of Covent Garden, both before and behind the curtain; a privilege, which, by succeeding managers, has been unremittingly continued to me. I was honoured with the same terms of intimacy by Mr Garrick at Drury Lane, which I enjoyed to the day of his death.

I WAS for some time concerned in the management in Dublin; and for ten years past, have necessarily gained some little knowledge in my official capacity in this Theatre. In all that period, not one instance occurred that could induce me to change my sentiments on the subject: And the opinion I had thus formed has been lately confirmed by the first theatrical authority now living.

RIOTOUS attempts in behalf of, or in opposition to any established performer in London,
have

have been very rare. One instance only, that of Mr Lee, at present occurs to my remembrance, which happened, I think, in the year fifty-eight, (of which I was an eye-witness). It appeared evidently a partial combination. It lasted only one night, and that for a very short space. The friends of the Theatre proved victorious, and detection and disappointment to the aggressors were the result.

IN provincial Theatres, the audiences are more limited, and the restrictions of the actors less ascertained. There a performer, even with a small degree of merit, and some address, finds it no very difficult matter, if he lays himself out for the purpose, to be introduced into company, and to obtain an acquaintance. This point established, his protection from the partiality of the friends he has gained, becomes secure.

HE holds his situation, plays his routine of characters, and, wrapt in security, laughs at superior merit. He is esteemed a *Bon Vivant*, and a good kind of man; and, in spite of the abilities of a stranger, tenfold in comparison
to

to what he possesses, must have the preference.

THUS the partial and limited ideas of the partizans on one side, and the broad and general opinion of those on the other, must immediately clash, and consequently create animosities and party disputes in a narrow circle, which, in a wider and more extended scale, can seldom, and that with difficulty, exist.

THE disturbance in the Edinburgh Theatre in 1788, was certainly very prematurely entered upon by the original aggressors; I mean the anonymous letter-writers, and first opposers of the performance of *Venice Preserved*. Prior to the dispute, indeed before the above play, which gave rise to it, was advertised, a gentleman meeting me accidentally in the street, enquired of me, "Who was to do *Jaffier*?" I told him, "Mr Fennell." He replied, "Mr Woods has played the part." "Yes," I answered, "he has, and very respectably; and so has Mr Fennell. But my opinion is, that Mr Fennell should do *Jaffier*, and Mr Woods *Pierre*, as being the best manner the parts could be cast."

HERE

HERE the conversation upon that subject ended. Had that gentleman then been so candid as to have acquainted me, that he and a few friends of Mr Woods, wished to see him in *Jaffier*, I should as candidly have informed him of the exact state of my situation in that respect; that Mr Fennell really wished, and requested, to play *Pierre*; but that Mr Woods having had the part given to him, and having studied it, was averse to the change.

I SHOULD likewise have acquainted him, that it was my most anxious desire, my interest, and my duty, to cast the plays as should be deemed most acceptable to the public; whose voice was, and always should be, a law with me; and whatever performer they most approved of, they should certainly see. My opinion in this case would have been, that the two competitors should have played the parts alternately, and which-ever actor the audience most approved, should certainly have retained the part.

A DECLARATION of this kind from me, at that period, would, I presume, have satisfied the gentleman and his friends, and might possibly have

have prevented the disagreeable measures that succeeded. The anonymous letter-writer would have been spared some trouble ; Mr Fennell might perhaps have proceeded in his duty, without the appearance of disapprobation ; and the calling out for the manager would have been rendered unnecessary, by the foregoing information.

THE anonymous letter before mentioned, I should have passed over in silence, as I do numbers in the course of a season*, had I not deemed it necessary to put Mr Fennell on his guard, should any attempt be made by the writer or his adherents to carry those threats expressed in his letter into execution.

IN the progress of the dispute, the ground of quarrel was changed, and, at a very early period, the contention assumed a very different aspect, the original cause having been lost in subsequent consequences. The quarrel now, was an offence taken by a respectable society at an expression dropt in the course of the dispute by Mr Fennell. The discussion of this point I shall not enter upon ; as I mean

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* Vide Appendix, No. IX.

to confine myself to those parts of the contention only, in which I was involved.

ON the Wednesday morning, a requisition* was sent me, signed by a number of respectable gentlemen, with which I thought it a duty incumbent upon me to comply.

MR FENNELL having refused to accede to the terms of accommodation proposed, on Wednesday evening I addressed the audience in the following words :—

GENTLEMEN,

“I AM exceedingly sorry, that through the whole course of my conduct, as manager, during the late disputes at the Theatre, I should, in any one instance, have been supposed to have taken part with Mr Fennell, in an improper manner. I have the highest veneration for this audience. It is, it has been, and ever shall be, my fixed resolution, to preserve, as much as possible, a due respect to the public; and if, on this occasion, in the minutest circumstance, I should have been considered as having failed in my duty, it was unintentional, and I am sorry for it.

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LADIES

* Vide Appendix, No. X.

LADIES and GENTLEMEN,

“ IT gives me inexpressible concern, to be under the disagreeable necessity of informing you, that, till this unhappy dispute is settled, *Mr Fennell is withdrawn.*”

THIS apology put a period to the disturbances in the Theatre ; and Mr Fennell’s dismissal gave peace to the contending parties. But peace came not to me. Tranquillity is seldom, very seldom, the lot of a manager. Mr Garrick, in some of his writings, says, that the plagues of management, in one year, are sufficient to expiate a whole life of sin.

MR GARRICK’s unpleasing dilemmas could arise from managerial embarrassments merely ; from the impediments to stage-arrangements ; from the discontent of some disappointed actor, or the caprice of actresses ; of the latter, to my knowledge, he had frequently his share : But he had no disquietudes from money-concerns. From a long flow of prosperity, and the tide of success, his coffers were full ; mine were nearly exhausted : And my pecuniary adjustments were so totally overturned by this untoward
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circumstance, that I was obliged to struggle through the greatest difficulties to provide for the deficiency—a deficiency so considerable, that, should I mention the sum, it would scarcely be believed. And yet when it is considered that I lost a whole week of Mrs Siddons' performance; that the popular new pieces, that had been preparing for months, and for which Mr Fennell had been retained in Edinburgh from the close of the winter season, were obliged to be laid aside; that his removal from the old pieces created a vacancy, which, at the distance of four hundred miles from London, I could not possibly in a moment fill up; and when, to these considerations, I add the very great defalcation in my receipts to the repeated plays, and likewise observe, that the same cause operated in Glasgow, the loss cannot possibly be rated at a trifle.

I WAS the more disappointed on this head, as I had begun to build, and made purchases in the public service, that, from no unreasonable calculation, had the season gone smoothly through, would have been, as far as I expected, made up. For a well cultivated harvest

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was

was coming forward, and I had no suspicion of so unnatural a *blast*.

A PECUNIARY deficiency on this occasion, was not my only grievance. Prejudices had taken root; and a dissemination of dislikes is sometimes more detrimental than a defalcation of finance.

“ Good name, in man and woman,

“ Is the immediate jewel of our souls.

“ Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;

“ 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.

“ But he who filches from me my good name,

“ Robs me of that which not enriches him,

“ And makes me poor indeed.”

THROUGH the whole progress of this unfortunate business, I am not conscious of having acted unbecomingly my situation in any respect. From its origin to the conclusion, I laboured to prevent its effects. I remonstrated with Mr Fennell on the stage; I procured an interview for him with gentlemen of the law, of eminence and rank; and on the morning of the day on which I was to pronounce the disagreeable sentence, I wrote him a letter of some length, conjuring him to consider his own situation,

situation, to reflect upon mine, and, by every tie of gratitude to the public, and friendship to me, that he would make the required submission, which, though bitter at present, would sweeten his future pursuits in life, and be the sure road to popularity and fame.

THE most apparent culpable circumstance then adduced to my charge, was, that four or five gentlemen, avowed partizans of Mr Fennell, appeared in one of the side-boxes, the last night of the dispute, and that they were placed there by my direction. It is true the gentlemen came there, but not by my appointment.

THE circumstance above alluded to happened from the company in a side-box joining that of a lady in the balcony, thereby occasioning a vacancy below, of which the gentlemen before mentioned availed themselves. In this transaction, I was by no means instrumental; nor could I have prevented it from taking place, however I might have been inclined to it.

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THE feats were arranged* *at seven o'clock in the morning*, and the ladies names inserted in the plan of the house. No place, therefore, could possibly have been given that day, with any party design whatsoever, as, till past five o'clock in the afternoon, I had not the least suspicion of any disturbance being intended that evening ; being fully convinced, in my own mind, that all differences had been finally adjusted the preceeding play night.

BUT, granting the contrary to have been the case, that I had suspected the disturbances of the former nights were to be renewed, and had consequently taken measures to secure the property, and to protect the peace of the house, the transaction was surely a most natural one, and might easily be justified upon the principles of self-preservation,

THE conduct adhered to by the London managers, on the like occasion, is the only precedent we can apply to. There, on the least shadow of a disturbance being meditated, measures the most effectual are adopted to counteract its effects.

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* See Appendix, No. XI.

IF a new play is intended to be run down, a young actor exploded, or any arrangement of the managers is expected to be opposed, from private animosity, partial pique, or particular whim, the friends of the Theatre are immediately applied to, and stationed in groups in every part of the house; there joining the plaudits of the unbiaſſed auditors, they openly exert their influence in ſupport of the meaſure, without ever being deemed culpable for their interference, or any blame being thrown upon the manager for ſeeking their ſupport.

THIS, however, was not my conduct; nor were any extraordinary exertions on my ſide practiſed on that occaſion: And I flatter myſelf, I can at this moment ſay, what I believe few managers, after ſuch an unfortunate diſturbance, would have been able to have ſaid,

THAT I did not prepare my door-keepers in the front of the houſe, or my ſervants behind the curtain, for any offensive or defensive meaſures whatſoever.

THAT

THAT I did not admit a *single person* clandestinely into any part of the house, either before the doors were opened, or by any other secret mode.

THAT there was not *one* person introduced into the audience part of the house, by orders, or any other means, that did not absolutely pay for admission: Nor did any person enter the house, even by payment, collusively with my knowledge.

AND, with these declarations, I shall bid adieu, to the subject.

SECT.

S E C T. X.

Theatrical season of eighty-nine successful—That of ninety not so—Reasons why—Deficiency in the manager's finances—Causes thereof—Annual receipts and expenditures of the Theatre—Nightly expences—General statement of funds and disbursements—Effects of the Circus upon the Theatre Royal.

THE Edinburgh theatrical season of *eighty-nine* passed over not disadvantageously with respect to pecuniary matters. Mr King's well known and established abilities operated very powerfully towards augmenting the receipts ; and the habits of friendship which subsisted betwixt that gentleman and myself, rendered more light the cares and fatigues of stage business.

THE year ninety commenced with the representation of the dramatic pantomimical spectacle of the Destruction of the Bastile, under the title of *Liberty Triumphant*, and the assemblage of a most numerous and excellent company, as the reader must have noticed

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from

from a perusal of the *dramatis personæ* of that season.

It will undoubtedly in this place be deemed necessary, that I should say something explanatory of the causes that brought on those derangements of my finances which at that period commenced. My own feelings, were no such explanation expected, would prompt me to the measure.

AMIDST that variety of unpleasing sensations, which, in the situation I was in, must unavoidably have pervaded my mind, there was one of a different tendency, which invariably afforded me no small consolation and support. It was a satisfaction, in my own breast, arising from the knowledge of never having appropriated a single shilling to any other purpose than the carrying on, and extending the theatrical plan in which I have been engaged. If either now, or hereafter, any thing to the contrary of this declaration should appear, I am content to lose the good opinion of every one concerned; of which, after the explanation I am about to give shall have been fairly understood, I flatter myself with the hopes of being fully possessed.

IN

IN order more clearly to ascertain the validity of this assertion, I must remind the public of Edinburgh of the situation in which I found the Theatre. I cannot devise any thing so wretched. There were neither scenes, wardrobe, or any other appendage suitable to a Theatre Royal. There was not even a roof; the thing so called was like a sieve, which let the rain through in a million of places.

WITH the house in this deranged state, I commenced manager. From the engagements my predecessor had entered into, comprising a list of many respectable names, but not one that possessed the powers of attraction, or, in the theatrical phrase, that was a *drawing object*, I lost from two to three hundred pounds*; and before the end of the year, with painting, machinery, wardrobe, decorations, and repairs, I was above a thousand pounds in advance. From that period I have brought down almost every actor or actress of consequence, that London could produce*. By some of these I profited; by several I lost considerably: And during no one season since

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I com-

* Anno 1782.

† See the ten years list.

I commenced manager have I received as much money as I expended upon the general plan.

I WOULD not here be supposed to insinuate that I never had any profit ; that would be far wide of my meaning, and render the subject in contention obviously not worth the possession. After the common occurrences of salaries, and every other weekly expenditure, I certainly had a gain. And could I have contented myself with carrying on the theatrical plan on the same confined scale in which I found it, this vindication had been rendered unnecessary. But I had an ambition, and a laudable one, I presume, it will be deemed, however, from unexpected consequences, it may, for the present, have failed in its effect. I longed to see the Theatre of Edinburgh on a footing with the rest of the city ; and wished it to proceed in its improvements in an equal degree. With that view, I erected a colonade at the north end of the house, for which a subscription was entered into, and, in all probability, would soon have been filled, had it not been nipped in the very bud, by the theatrical contentions in 1788. Those unfortunate

nate disputes not only rendered the subscription totally abortive, faddling me, by that means, with the whole expence of the building, but brought upon me various inconveniences and losses. I had meditated further improvements upon the Theatre, ornamental as well as useful ; the propriety of which measure cannot be better ascertained, than by informing the reader, that the buildings are now carrying on upon the same plan, from a conviction of the advantage and utility of the measure.

I AM aware, that it may be obtruded upon me as a fault, that I should so eagerly run into those extraneous projects (as they may be termed) that must necessarily bear so hard upon my finances.

THE necessity of my procuring Theatres for my company to perform in, when that of Edinburgh was shut, is an unanswerable argument in favour of my straining every nerve to get a house at Aberdeen, which, with those of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee, would have formed a compact and regular scheme ; would have produced a yearly salary
to

to the performers ; and consequently rendered the Edinburgh theatrical plan complete.

THIS necessary and laudable endeavour led me into great and numerous expences ; which, however, were not run into hastily, but upon very mature deliberation ; and under the strongest assurance of a pecuniary support, to no inconsiderable amount. *In that I was disappointed* ; and from that disappointment the deficiency in my finances arose.

The sum total of the nightly receipts

of the year 1789, was	-	L. 5180	5	0
The current expences,	-	4454	1	5
Profit,	—	L. 726	3	7

Nightly receipts of 1790,	-	L. 5275	8	6
Expences,	-	5297	1	11
Loss,	—	L. 21	13	5

THE particular articles in these accompts have undergone a long and a close investigation ; and are now open for the inspection of those, whose interest or curiosity urges them to the trouble of a perusal.

IN

IN the above annual statements, there are no salaries put down for myself or Mrs Jackson, in order to swell up the sum : No allowance for keeping up the wardrobe ; for the expence of the company's journeys ; for the loss of the summer vacations, for want of a circular yearly plan* ; which has cost me so much, in endeavouring to obviate, by building at Aberdeen.

THERE are also in those accompts payments for items entirely unconnected with the weekly accompts, to the amount of L. 2093 : 8 : 9 $\frac{1}{2}$.

My weekly expences to performers this winter, 1790, were L. 100 3 0

For rents, estimated at			
600l. a-year, music, ser-			
vants, lights, printing,			
advertisements, and in-			
cidents, - - -	60	5	0
	<hr/>		
	L. 160	8	0

Nightly expences, at three nights a-			
week, - - -	L. 54	2	8
At four nights a-week, - - -	40	2	0

Cash

* The loss of the autumn vacation 1788, was more than L. 100, and that of 1791, above L. 200.

Cash paid for different properties, houses,
lands, and appendages.

Ground east of the Edinburgh Theatre,	-	-	-	L.550	0	0
Dr Drysdale's house, to procure the servitude upon the ground, the whole purchase L.500, paid	-	200	0	0		
Roofing, repairs, and necessary alterations to the Theatre,	-	500	0	0		
Annuities in consequence of purchase of the Theatre,	-	-	2700	0	0	
To proprietors, arrears of interest,		500	0	0		
Painting of the Theatres, and scenery,		800	0	0		
Machinery, canvas, timber, furniture, wardrobe, carpeting, cordage, and iron work,	-	2000	0	0		
Money lost, by advance to performers,	.	500	0	0		
Fees and expences of patent,	.	300	0	0		
Shares of Theatre purchased,	.	340	0	0		
Property on Leith Walk,	-	105	0	0		
The Glasgow property, more than		3000	0	0		
Paid for property, buildings, and arrears, at Aberdeen,	.	500	0	0		
				<hr/>		
				L. 11,995	0	0

THESE

THESE totals of the receipts and disbursements, the particulars of which, though too voluminous to be here inserted, are, as before observed, open for inspection, must, at first sight, dispel that impulse of surprise I have frequently heard started, at what could have become of the *vast sums* taken at the doors? The wonder on this occasion ought rather to be, how I could pay so large a sum; as, from the statement produced, it could not possibly arise out of the profits of the Theatre:—Most certainly upon interest; by the assistance of my friends; and the postponing other payments, which unavoidably brought me into those arrears that fell at last so heavily upon me.

I MUST here also observe, that previous to opening the Theatre (1790), I judged it necessary to be as strong as possible, on account of the opposition at the Circus preparing against me. With that view, I brought forward, from models procured at London, the *Basile*, which was drawing overflows to the several Theatres where it was then representing.

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THOUGH expensively got up, and excellently performed, with a variety of costly scenery and apparatus, it had not the expected attraction here. This, with other preparations and expences, at the commencement of the season, cost upwards of L. 300.

I MADE the greatest exertions too, in procuring a company; and proved successful. I think, I can truly assert, that a completer one has not been seen in Edinburgh. That of Mr Foote's was the only one that can possibly stand in competition with it. For the satisfaction of the reader, I have placed a comparison betwixt the two in the Appendix*.

MY expences were however of course proportionably high†; and my receipts, those of the galleries, particularly, being thinned by the Circus, I consequently lost upon the whole, as has been already stated, L. 21 : 13 : 5, exclusive of the necessary repairs upon the Theatre, wardrobe, and scenery, and expence of my family. This loss, so caused by the drain of cash going constantly to the Circus, was evidently the occasion of my being straitened

* See No. VII.

† See page 183.

ened at the close of the season ; for, at a moderate calculation, not of my own stating, I could not have had less than L. 700 or L. 800, drawn out of the receipts I might reasonably have expected, provided there had been no such attraction against me. And that sum, making the profits upon a par* with the former year, would have answered every demand that would then have been made upon me.

HERE again it may reasonably be suggested, why did I extend my expences farther than the receipts would defray ? My reply to this is, that prior contracts had been entered into ; bills accepted at Aberdeen on account of the house erecting there ; for arrears of materials of various kinds ; painting and repairs requisite for keeping open the different Theatres in my possession, not included in the current expences of the week. My bill to one artist alone was L. 1000 : 0 : 6, of which L. 635 : 16 : 6 was paid.

A PERSON who enters upon a farm, under the hopes of holding it for life, however despoiled, and run out by rack-renters and year-

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* L. 704 : 10 : 2.

ly tenants, it may be found by the new comer, he nevertheless looks forward to the future produce he expects ; and, under the hopes of enjoying a plentiful return, pursues his adopted plan of cultivation and improvements, to the very extent of his power and abilities. He rears up fences and plantations, erects buildings, and subjoins every needful appendage thereto. If permitted by providence, or man, to enjoy the fruits of his labour, he soon begins to find his industry rewarded ; the original expenditure every year diminishes ; and a regular and permanent advantage finally ensues.

BUT if by some unrelenting creditor, or the cruelty of an hard-hearted landlord, he is compelled to give up his possession, his expectations are in an instant blasted ; and he beholds, with a mortifying concern, the produce of his well cultivated inclosures carried in by another ; while he himself is compelled to wander to some barren forsaken soil, to prepare fresh harvests, perhaps for some new invader.

IN

IN a like situation did I enter upon my farm; its appearance and condition nearly similar. The mansion having been occupied by a variety of temporary tenants, had been in its repair little attended to. Its furniture had been pilfered and carried away; and its roof, by inattention and neglect, plundered of its lead, might be seen through in many places. Its woods were destroyed, its vistas annihilated, its gardens trampled down, and its sheep-cots and out-buildings were in ruins.

BUT allegory apart—Let me bring reality to your eyes. I have hitherto accosted your justice; I shall now have recourse to your humanity. For thirty years I have been a temporary resident in Edinburgh; the last ten seasons a citizen, and the manager of your Theatre. During that period, I have exerted every faculty to augment your amusements. Every shilling of the profits have been expended, and every shilling, in my power to procure, exhausted, in order to increase the interest and credit of the theatrical concern. I laid up no hoards, secured no secret funds, depending upon the profits of seasons to come. In this I should not have found a disappointment.

ment. My cares, my anxiety and toil would have finally been repaid, had I been permitted to reap the harvests, when ripe, upon the lands I had cultured.

THE apparent success of the season, from the receipts of such great houses, as had occasionally been seen, particularly during the race week, induced those, to whom I stood indebted, to become pressing for payment, as supposing a want of inclination in me only had occasioned the delay. Previous to this period, I had become sensible that the receipts of the Theatre, then to come, even upon the broadest scale of calculation, from the greatness of my expence, could not possibly supply the demands that must soon be made upon me. I therefore negotiated a loan for five hundred pounds, for which I was to give a mortgage upon part of my property. I had received one hundred, and was to have been paid the other four in two days.

BUT an impatient creditor, being a little over hasty, as is often on such occasions the case, though he had been made acquainted with the measure, and had consented to remain

main satisfied, on his receiving fifty pounds of the money, took a step (contrary to his compact) which effectually stopped the security from being completed, and thereby prevented both myself and him from receiving another shilling.

HAD I not been deprived of that sum, in the manner stated, I have no hesitation in saying, that the disagreeable event, which in consequence followed, could not then have taken place; and, in all probability, never thereafter would have happened.

FOR having escaped the danger, had a successful season followed, and had I procured time to have consulted friends, by contracting my property, and putting matters upon a proper arrangement, the storm might have been weathered.

MR KING's benefit, on the Monday after the races, was free. I had therefore no relief from that. Several pressures came on, and I was compelled to submit to the shock. I have the satisfaction, however, on this occasion, of declaring, that when the sequestration
took

took place, though L.993:15:3 had passed through my hands in the course of the three preceeding weeks, I sought my personal safety with only nine shillings in my pocket, the only sum in my possession upon earth.

DURING the short period of my retirement, from the 21st of July to the 21st of August, the company continued at Edinburgh and Glasgow, under the direction of Mr King; where the lovers of Thalia were most amply gratified, in beholding the comic efforts of that admirable actor, carried to the highest pitch of excellence, by the combining and heightening exertions of the amiable, the elegant, the accomplished Farren.

S E C T.

S E C T. XI.

Mrs Esten's first appearance—Her success and attraction—Letter to Mr Harris concerning her—Other occurrences—Letter concerning Mrs Billington's engagement—Her station in the vocal line.

THE winter season of 1790 had commenced at Glasgow, and I was disappointed with respect to one of my female engagements. I went instantly to London, in order, if possible, even at that late period, to supply the defect. I applied to Mr Harris, with whom I have constantly been upon terms of friendship. I told him, my chief business at that time in London, was in search of a lady, who could supply the first line of characters in Edinburgh; and requested his information and assistance therein. I added, she must be young, handsome, and accomplished.

MR HARRIS mentioned two. One had been with me; the other I had never heard of. He informed me, that she had been a

B b candidate

candidate for the season, a pretty little woman, and her name was Esten: That she had a good figure, and possessed strong theatrical requisites; but that his company, previous to her application, had been made up.

I TOOK down the address, and waited upon her accordingly that forenoon. I found her at home with her mother, in Sutry. She answered the description I had given to Mr Harris; appeared to me the very lady I was in quest of, and I entered into an engagement with her before I left the house.

MRS ESTEN made her first appearance in Edinburgh, upon Tuesday, January 19. 1790,* in the part of *Juliet*; *Romeo*, Mr Pope; *Friar Laurence*, Mr Williamson; *Peter*, Mr Moss; and *Mercutio*, Mr Woods: With Mrs Barrisford's *Lady Racket* in the farce.

THE

* Mrs Esten afterwards, the same season, performed *Belvidera*; *Lady Townly*; *Desdemona*; *Lady Macbeth*; *Sigismunda*; *Indiana*; *Ophelia*; *Letitia Hardy*; *Rosalind*; *Widow Belmour*; *Portia*; *Beatrice*; *Lady Respects*; *Penelope*, in *Gamsters*; *Estifania*; *Monimia*, *Collins' Ode*, and *Roxalana*; *Imogen*; *Calista*; *Harriet*, *Guardian*; *Violante*; *Dorinda*, *Tempest*; *Mrs Oakly*; *Child of Nature*; and *Lady Bell Bloomer*.

THE reception of the new *Juliet* was as flattering as her most sanguine expectations could have formed. She appeared in a variety of characters afterwards, with a growing strength of reputation; her expression and discrimination of the passions in *Collins' Ode*, stampd her, in the estimation of the Edinburgh audience, as one of the most favourite daughters of Thespis; and she was adopted, by the general voice, as the theatrical child of Scotland.

SHE soon grew to maturity; and proved a fresh instance of the dramatic judgment of the audience of Edinburgh.

I WAS in treaty with Mrs Esten for the whole of the following season, (1791) and went to Doncaster, finally to settle the terms; but, before I arrived, overtures from Mr Harris of Covent Garden had been made to her, so peculiarly advantageous, that it must have been the height of imprudence in Mrs Esten not to have embraced the offer. And however strongly her accepting of a London engagement, at that crisis, might operate against my interest, I could not disapprove of the measure.

MRS ESTEN assured me, that she entertained so grateful a sense of the favours she had received from the Edinburgh audience, that she would pay them a visit, the moment an opportunity served ; and pledged her word to me, at parting, that the Edinburgh Theatre, should be the first place she would perform in out of London.

SHE soon made good that promise ; for having procured a short leave of absence from Mr Harris in the spring, she engaged with me for the time ; and brought with her such a power of attraction, as to fetch up the latter part of rather a lagging season, and closed the winter with success.

ON Mrs Esten's departure from Edinburgh, I transmitted the following letter to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre.

Shakespeare Square, Edinburgh, April 7. 1791.

SIR,

“ AFTER repeating my acknowledgements for former favours, I beg leave to thank you for a new and lasting obligation conferred upon me, I mean your first introducing me

to

to the acquaintance of Mrs Eften, and your thus kindly permitting her to come to my assistance at this juncture.

“ I CANNOT think of permitting that lady to leave Edinburgh, without acquainting you, Sir, whatever may be asserted to the contrary, by malice or detraction, which too often pursue growing merit, that her rise and progress here have been great, almost beyond conception.

“ I CONGRATULATE you, myself, and the theatrical world, on so valuable an acquisition to the *British Stage*. And am,

SIR,

With the greatest sincerity,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

J. JACKSON.”

Thomas Harris, Esq.

Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

IN

IN the spring of that year, 1791, the clouds of warfare began to collect, and threatened the northern hemisphere with a storm. It went off in evaporation, with respect to political matters, but some of its groffer particles fell upon me.

THE rendezvous of the British Fleet had been appointed in Leith Roads. I had authentic information of this event, from London; and it was strongly recommended to me, by some of the first characters in Edinburgh, to have a company ready, as the fleet would certainly be here, and that for some time. I took their advice, which also accorded with my own ideas, and engaged a very respectable and expensive set of performers, which continued inactive, or drawing nothing, for many weeks. The fleet was laid up, and my scheme consequently rendered abortive. Instead of clearing perhaps a thousand, as I might have done, had the ships arrived, I lost some hundreds, by their being remanded to their own harbours. The weakness or wisdom of a design is generally estimated by its failure or success.

“ The vanquish’d rebel, as a rebel dies,

“ The victor rebel plumes him on a throne.”

HAD

HAD the scheme turned out to advantage, I should have been applauded for my assiduity and forethought; the reverse affixed upon me perhaps blame, as well as loss.

THIS scanty harvest, I had flattered myself, would be amply made up by the following season; for which I had exerted every effort in my power; and was thereby possessed of the means, by providing a most excellent company. I had little doubt, also, from the state of our correspondence*, of procuring Mrs Billington, during some part of the season, who consequently must have proved a very powerful auxiliary: For, with a most beautiful person, she possesses such vivacity and scientific

No. 53. Poland Street, Feb. 28.

* DEAR SIR,

" I SHOULD have written you long before, but the uncertainty as to the time of the different music meetings has prevented me; and I find that it will be impossible for Mrs Billington to be in Edinburgh at the time I first thought of; therefore, must defer that pleasure to a future season.

Mrs Billington desires her best respects. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. BILLINGTON."

J. Jackson, Esq. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

scientific knowledge in the musical department, as to render her the most captivating dramatic syren of the age.

BUT the person who at that time possessed the power of controlling my fortune, though he had himself known the ups and downs of life, would not allow me another trial. The Theatre was advertised to be let for a year to the highest bidder ; and a clause was inserted in the articles of roup, that previous security should be lodged by the parties proposing to bid ; a clause professedly intended to prevent any offer from me,

IN this situation, it was judged advisable for me to seek for some additional strength. Two competitors started for the lease. Mrs Estlin, and Mr Stephen Kemble. My wish was to have been connected with the former ; but Mrs Bennett not coming down, as she had intended, and some mistake happening with those who conducted the business on her part, I was thereby unfortunately thrown into a treaty with Mr Kemble.

SECT.

S E C T. XII.

A

STATEMENT OF FACTS,

RELATIVE TO

MR STEPHEN KEMBLE.

I AM now arrived at that period in which I am to speak of Mr Kemble, whose singularity of conduct has been the sole motive for my undertaking this work. In various advertisements to the public, he has repeatedly arrogated to himself the very specious epithets of *candour* and *justice*. In my only reply to those assertions, I pledged myself to the world, in proper time, to prove that his conduct has been such as to merit the reverse of *both*.

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I HERE

I HERE enter upon the subject, and though in its composition the acid is so powerful an ingredient, that it must predominate, yet it shall be handled as lightly as possible; and the touch of a friend shall soften the edge of its asperity.

I CONSENTED that, "Mr Kemble should have a *joint* and an *equal* concern with me in the Theatres of Edinburgh and Glasgow, for a year." Missives were exchanged, of which the following are copies:—

Edinburgh November 2. 1791.

SIR,

"I HEREBY agree to your having a joint and equal concern with me in the Edinburgh Theatre, for a year from this date, and authorize you to take the lease at the sale to-day; and oblige myself to procure satisfactory security for half of the rent; the receipts to be equally divided weekly. After the lease is taken, we shall enter into a regular agreement on stamped paper; and if any difficulty occurs in adjusting the same, or afterwards in relation to the business, it shall be referred entirely to the Dean of Faculty.

"If

“ IF you incline you shall be entitled to the same share in time coming, I having the like option of holding also a joint concern.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,
J. JACKSON.”

Mr Stephen Kemble.

Edinburgh, November 2. 1791.

SIR,

“ I HEREBY agree to your proposal in your letter of this day’s date ; and to extend a regular deed on stamped paper accordingly.

I am,

Your obedient servant,
S. KEMBLE.”

Mr J. Jackson.

IT was agreed, that if the lease was procured, *both* our names should be inserted. It was accordingly taken by Mr Kemble, but in his *own name* only. This ought to have given me alarm ; but I was lulled into security by the speciousness of his professions to me, ignorant, as I then was, of those assertions of so different a tendency, he was at the same time making to others.

THE very evening after the sale was over*, Mr Kemble was heard to declare, " I have agreed to receive Mr Jackson as a partner, " because I thought I might be hampered " with his claim upon the patent. But though " I have admitted him apparently, I have virtually excluded him: For he is to give security, and I will accept of no security but " such as I know it is *not in his power to give.* " It shall be *landed property, or money down ;* " and that not only to the extent of the rent " and public burdens, but to any supposed " amount for contingent loss."

ON breakfasting at my house, the following morning, our future arrangements were adjusted, and every precaution that could be suggested by either party was taken, towards the establishment of a permanent and good understanding.

THE mode of security on my side was settled. The engagements that had been previously entered into by me, were explained; and their salaries and situations, both actors and servants, affixed. The painting of the scenery,

• Wednesday, November 2. 1791.

scenery, and necessary repairs of the Theatre, were adjusted. The box which I had possessed for ten years was to be reserved for me; another of the same dimensions, and in the same situation, on the opposite side of the house, was to be fitted up for Mr Kemble; and the management of the company, behind the curtain, was to be undertaken by him.

BEFORE Mr Kemble's departure for Sheffield, he desired to know to which of us letters or applications from performers, for engagements, should be addressed. I informed him, that I was going into Wales, upon business; and that I wished, for a time, till my other matters were arranged, to be relieved, as much as possible, from managerial cares: I therefore proposed, that all letters should be addressed to him. It was consequently so inserted in the next newspapers*.

DURING this adjustment of our affairs, Mr Kemble's expressions were apparently so friendly, his claims to philanthropy so strong, and his professions of *candour* and *liberality* so lavishly bestowed, that I must confess myself
totally

* Saturday, November 5.

totally thereby thrown off my guard. Had I not obviously been under the power of fascination, I should have said, with *Sir Oliver Surface*,

“ Too ceremonious by half.”

WHEN he boasted of his magnificent scenery, that was to be brought for *our mutual use*, with no other expence but the carriage; when he magnified the vast advantages that must accrue from the exertions of the *friendship*, as well as the acting, of his brother, Mr John Kemble, who, he undertook, should open the house; and when he dwelt upon the influence of his sister's connections and attraction, could I suspect that they were thus enumerated, without the least intention of my being admitted to the smallest participation of advantage?

ON the next day but one, Saturday November 5. at Mr Hallion's, after dinner, and previous to Mr Kemble's stepping into the mail coach, the *farce* was re-enacted. There the mask of friendship was *thickly* worn: Cordiality, peace, and good fellowship, were to be the characteristics of our future union. Mr
Jackson

Jackfon and Mr Kemble were to be equal and the same; equal in salaries, equal in benefits : and in order to provide for contingencies, *eight pounds* a-week each, was to be taken out, *to make the pot boil*, as Mr Kemble termed it. His rich wardrobe was to be joined *gratis* with that of mine ; and other advantages, resulting from the partnership, were enumerated.

WHEN the purport of this discourse shall be compared with his declaration the evening after the sale, can the word *candour*, with propriety, be assumed by Mr Kemble ?

HAVING thus parted with my so apparently *open-hearted* colleague, not dreaming of the most distant possibility of any misunderstanding arising betwixt us, what must have been my astonishment, on his declaration to me, and his instructions to Mr Bisset, transmitted from Sheffield? In his letters from thence*, he declares, “ I am directed by my *friends* not to accept of any security, but such as Mr Gibson shall think sufficient,

and

* To Andrew Bisset, November 27.
To J. Jackfon, December 5.

and such as he will himself immediately accept; and all this must be done prior to the opening of the Theatre, or all agreements betwixt you and me must become void. The security must be either the *money down*, or else a *mortgage of property or estate**." In his instructions to Mr Biffet, November 27. he says, "I will not consent to their† having *free benefits*; I shall insist upon their paying the usual expences; but I demand a *free benefit* for Mrs Kemble;" although in the contract drawn up by Mr Biffet, was inserted by his own order, November 5. "It being hereby understood and agreed on by the parties, that they shall be respectively entitled to the sum of L. 8 Sterling *per* week, of salary, for themselves, Mrs Kemble, and Mrs Jackson, and a free benefit to each of the said four named persons."

It is left to Mr Kemble to reconcile these two contradictory orders, and to point out the liberality of his *last instruction*.

THAT

* The *very words* he had used the evening after the rousp, as before quoted, page 204.

† Mr and Mrs Jackson.

THAT Mr Kemble clearly and pointedly agreed to accept of the security I offered, the only one, in my then situation, I *could offer*, is proved by the scroll of the contract, drawn out at his own desire, and by his own man of business. He there pointedly inserts as my security, the name of the gentleman, who he had previously concerted, should be joined with me ; and who I invariably offered to the arbiter. This scroll may be seen in the hands of the clerk to the arbitration, or a copy of it with me.

It was at Bala, in North Wales, I was informed by a letter from my agent, that a scroll had been presented to him, quite contrary to the original missive*, which he had on that account rejected ; and that he had drawn out another, consonant to his ideas, which he had delivered to Mr Bisset, to be transmitted to Mr Kemble.

WHEN the reader recurs to the actual terms of the missive, and compares them
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* Scroll by Mr Bisset, Mr Kemble's agent.

with the conditions of the new scroll, which were, that Mr Kemble should have "the sole and *uncontrolled* management and direction of the Theatre, to engage and pay the performers, and to undertake every other duty incumbent upon a manager, without the interference or assistance of the said John Jackson," he will surely acknowledge, that a party in an agreement, whose missive positively expresses a *joint* and *equal concern*, was justified in rejecting terms equally disgraceful and oppressive.

WRITE volumes, or speak hours, upon the subject, the most far-strained arguments can never constitute *uncontrolled management*, and *equal concern*, synonymous expressions.

IN this state of the business the Theatre opened, under the uncontrolled management of the man whose agreement with me was to take a joint and an equal concern. That I felt the unfair advantage taken of my situation, that I knew every means was used to prejudice the public against me, and to establish Mr Kemble, I will not deny; but I also knew my agreement with him would terminate

nate with the year ; and having neither *money* nor *landed property*, as he too truly said, I made up my mind to receive the sum agreed upon, in Mr Kemble's *considerate mood*, to make the pot boil. But no such grace was intended for me. Myself, my wife, and three children, who, though not bred in luxury, had at least been used to eat, were to seek our subsistence elsewhere ; for Mr Kemble positively refused, unless I could compass impossibilities, namely, to bring him money or land, to divide with me a single shilling. How in this situation the dreary winter must have passed over the heads of an insolvent family, the feeling mind, and I trust I am appealing to many such, may guess ; it is past my power to describe.

By Mr Kemble's thus arrogating to himself powers which the missive never so much as hinted at ; and by his exerting *these powers*, even to a *wantonness* of *oppression*, I was reduced to the necessity of having recourse to the Dean of Faculty's interference ; and notwithstanding my being thoroughly convinced of having given in the security

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agreed

agreed upon, and that, *bona fide*, in every sense sufficient ; yet, without allowing it to call in question the validity of the former caution, in order to remove all cavils upon that head, I sent in the name of a second surety, equally responsible, and that before our first interview with the Honourable Arbitrator took place.

BUT this, and every other endeavour, on my side, to accommodate matters upon fair and honourable principles, were ineffectual. No accommodation for me, unless I consented to sell the birth-right of me and my family for “ a mess of pottage,” or to become “ a hewer of wood, or a drawer of water,” beneath the lash of Mr Stephen Kemble.

So certain was he of my never being able to outlive the storm, that, like the inhabitant of a barbarous coast, he smiled in safety upon the shore, and enjoyed the wished for and expected wreck, in hopes of sharing the spoil.

To this insidious conduct, Mr Kemble was pleased to add a series of ill-mannered insults, which

which could serve for no other purpose but to stamp the tyranny of *his own* character; for I was fallen, and in his triumph he forgot both mercy and justice; as a proof of which, I beg to trouble the reader with *two* instances, in addition to others that will hereafter appear. In a conversation which passed in the green-room, wherein my situation was discussed, Mr Kemble was so good as to declare, " Let Mr Jackson only express to me in writing, that he has no concern with me and the Theatre, and I shall consider what I shall do *for him and his family*." If I would give up my hopes of ever having it in my power to provide for my family; if I would resign a property that might enable me to fulfil my compact with my creditors; if I would become in the instant, a beggar, Mr Kemble would consider what *he* would do for my family. Is there a human being who has a spark of respect for himself, who would not with me, in such a situation, turn from the self-important Mr Kemble with contempt?

HAD my children been reduced to the situation he apparently wished, and to which he did all in his power to reduce them,
what

what he would, in that case, have done *for them*, may be guessed at, from a short dialogue, which I shall beg leave to introduce, between him and his servants, respecting *me*, as the other instance of his liberality.

ONE of the few nights that I troubled the Theatre last season, I desired the box-keeper to insert my name at the door. When the return was delivered to him; after the play, he demanded to know who I was. I see one Jackson here;—who is he?

Door-Keeper. Why, Mr Jackson.

Mr Kemble. What Mr Jackson?

Door-Keeper. Mr Jackson of the Theatre Royal.

Mr Kemble. Damn it, by G—d, that is too bad to come into my house.

THIS liberality to the father, would no doubt have been *trebled* upon the son, had he unfortunately stood in need of Mr Kemble's assistance.

THESE

THESE occurrences, mere introductory traits of Mr Kemble's conduct and carriage towards me, are trifling, when placed in comparison with the various steps he thought proper to take in the business, as will immediately be explained, in the annexed letters to the Right Honourable the Lord Advocate and the Dean of Faculty.

In which I have studiously endeavoured, from the bottom of my soul, to

“ Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.”

AND, let Mr Kemble's endeavours to explain be what they will, facts are stubborn things, which cannot be contraverted ; and the reader may rest assured, there is not an assertion already made, or that will hereafter appear in this publication, relating to Mr Kemble, that shall not be substantiated, in proper time, by the most respectable and uncontravertible evidence.

S E C T. XII.

*LETTERS to the Hon. HENRY ERSKINE,
Dean of Faculty.*

Edinburgh, April 18. 1792.

SIR,

As I have, in compliance with your requisition, lodged in the hands of your clerk, such letters as relate to the engagement in question; and as Mr Playfair has likewise officially delivered in a minute upon the business, the last which I hope will be necessary, it may possibly be deemed a work of supererogation for me to enter further into the subject. But where assertions, made by one party, under the averment of a respectable witness, are not to be received in evidence, because denied by the other, without farther corroborating proofs, nothing but a chain of corresponding circumstances, from first to last, can elucidate those facts, which a point blank denial has rendered doubtful; and as I have not hitherto in one instance acted contrary to

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the true and just meaning of the missive, I think it a duty, highly incumbent upon me, to beg leave, Sir, to lay before you a plain statement of the progress of the business, which, divested of protests, scrolls of contracts, memorials, and replies, may be comprised within the scope of your leisure, and by that means, amidst a pressure of more momentous concerns, stand a fairer chance of gaining at least a transient perusal. The sanction which on many occasions, and at various periods, for more than twenty years, you have been pleased to honour me with, will, I flatter myself, ensure me this favour.

AFTER some conversation with Mr Kemble on the subject, it was agreed that he should be admitted to a *joint and equal concern* with me in the lease of the Theatre, for a year, provided it could be procured; and immediately before the sale, it was finally resolved upon, that Mr Kemble should be the bidder, and that if it was knocked down to him, he should then declare that the purchase of the lease was for himself and me conjunctly. This adjustment of the matter, in that stage of the business, was in company

pany with Mr Playfair, at my house. The lease for a year was obtained; but Mr Kemble gave in his own name only as the purchaser. It did not occur to me at that moment that I should be liable to experience such disagreeable circumstances from the omission of my name in the lease, nor would I insinuate that it was done with any design by Mr Kemble, as his intention to throw me out of the advantages of the season altogether did not seem to have been a part of his plan, till some time after his arrival at Sheffield*.

As I had much business to adjust, respecting my own private concerns, I consented that the office of acting manager for the season, should devolve upon Mr Kemble. It was then resolved that the Newcastle Theatre should close the first week in January, and that this should open upon Saturday the 7th, of the same month, with Mr John Kemble in *Hamlet*, who was to perform six nights, on the same terms as Mrs Siddons, who was likewise

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* I was not then acquainted with Mr Kemble's declaration, made the evening after the sale, respecting the security, see page 204.

by agreement to be here in the course of the season, provided her health would permit.

ON Mr Kemble's being questioned how he would satisfy the Newcastle people, he replied, He had done it already. I told him I had attempted it*, but found it impossible, as they chose to have their Theatre open at the same time with ours. He said he had been fortunate enough to accomplish it, having obtained their consent to the measure. I did not at that time discredit the assertion. To all this Mr Playfair was an ear-witness.

I HAD then, Sir, a good company, and before the commencement of the season, should have had a most excellent one.— Our greatest difficulty, therefore, was to determine, who should *not* be engaged.

Room

* Eight or nine years ago, which was previous to the building of the present Theatre Royal of Newcastle, I was in treaty with some of the gentlemen of that place to form a junction with Edinburgh and Glasgow; but after a thorough investigation, I found the measure impracticable, as the Newcastle season is during the spring months, exactly at the same time with that of Edinburgh; and having been lately there, I can assert that they have not yet changed their sentiments on that subject.

Room could not be found for Mrs Barresford and Mr Williamson. In Mr Kemble's letter to that Gentleman, which I have in my possession, he gives as a reason for not retaining them, "That he finds, upon comparing notes with Mr Jackson, that so many performers are already engaged, that he has it not in his power to offer situations desirable to them," For the same reason neither Mr Hallion nor Messrs Charteris and Sparks could be engaged.

WITHOUT the smallest hint to me of any intended deviation from the forementioned plan, it soon appeared, from Mr Kemble's letters to others, that a second company was to be formed, as it was not, I presume, upon trial, found so easy a matter to persuade the town of Newcastle to permit the time of their amusements to be curtailed, in order to suit the convenience of an individual. Those actors, therefore, who had been discharged, or who could not be accommodated with situations before, were instantly applied to, and most of them engaged. The scarcity of performers on this emergency must be attributed to me—To me, at that period in the remotest part of North Wales,

Wales, ignorant of what was passing in the North of England, or in Edinburgh, and happy in the idea that the theatrical arrangements of the season had been so well adjusted. Had Mr. Kemble informed me even then of his intention, I might in some measure perhaps have been able to have obviated the difficulty. I passed in sight of Shrewsbury, where Mr. Scriven and Mrs. Atchmet then were; and it might possibly have been in my power to have persuaded them to have adhered to their former intentions of visiting Edinburgh. Nay, I could have gone easily to Bath, have settled with Mr. Wallis, and visited any other neighbouring company, or perhaps the metropolis. Such was my intention, had the sole direction continued with me.

MR PLAYFAIR'S letter to me at Bala, gave me the first intimation of any demur to the business. He therein apprised me of the receipt of a scroll, produced by Mr. Disset on the part of Mr. Kemble, containing clauses diametrically opposite to the true intent of the missive, which he knew I should object to: That he had drawn out another, according to his own ideas, which he should transmit

mit to Mr Kemble at Newcastle. Both these scrolls, Sir, are in your possession, and **must** speak for themselves.

IN the course of this narrative there are some points, Sir, on which I must beg leave to comment. With respect to Mrs Atchmet, that she would have been here, had the management remained solely with me, I still believe and contend for. Her reason for changing her intention, I have not *yet* had **an** opportunity of learning. Certain I am, that salary was not the bar; if it had, I would have given her more: though Mr Kemble thought even the L. 4 a week, which I had offered her, too much. I suspect the same cause might have operated with Mrs Atchmet as with Miss Wallis. In a letter from her father, which I have just now seen, dated Bath, January 26. 1792, though he disclaims any positive engagement, he says, "I should have been very glad to take her, (Miss Wallis,) to Edinburgh, *this winter*, had Jackson continued manager." And again, "tell your manager, I sincerely wish him success; though I confess I should have been just as well pleased to hear that the Edinburgh Theatre had fallen into any other hands,

hands, as I was in hopes Jane might have picked up some pence there*.”

I CANNOT help here observing, Sir, that I can take no share of culpability or negligence to myself as manager, for not having endeavoured, before that time, to have entered into a formal article with those ladies. The Theatre had been advertised to be let for some weeks; and common prudence compelled me to be as cautious as possible what engagements I made, as, had the Theatre not remained with me, I might have been brought into a very disagreeable predicament. This I explained to Mr Kemble, and he knew the exact situation in which I stood.

BUT positive and legal engagements, it appears, on this occasion, would have been of no avail. Messrs Scriven and Willoughby were under positive and legal engagements, yet they could not be induced to fulfil those engagements. The same uniform
cause

* An assertion had been made by Mr Kemble, in presence of the arbiter, which rendered it necessary for me to insert the above particulars. If the reader will take the trouble of turning to Section XV. he will there be made acquainted with the circumstance.

cause, I presume, operated with them all. These gentlemen were a real loss to the Theatre; the former, by report, is an excellent actor; the latter I have seen, and he is infinitely better than any one Mr Kemble brought with him; I must except Mr Lee-Lewes; he came by chance, and cannot consequently be ranked in Mr Kemble's engagements.

IN regard to the security, I can only say, that it was agreed upon, and was so understood by Mr Bisset, who had his instructions from Mr Kemble, and drew out the scroll accordingly*. The objection to *one* security, through form only, cannot surely hold good, as what is objectionable on one side, I must presume, Sir, should be so on the other. In this very transaction, there is an instance in point. Mr Siddons' *file* security is admitted for double the sum. Your reply to this, Sir, I know. You will say, why not remove difficulties when in your power? Why did you not long ago give in additional security? To
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* Had Mr Kemble, in one of his *candid* and *confidential* intervals, made the same declaration to me, that he did to others, that he would accept of no security but *landed property* or *money down*, I should have declined the connection, and all had been well.

this I have a ready, and, I should suppose, a satisfactory answer: I had but *one* person I chose to apply to on that occasion, and I reserved him for a more consequential purpose. I did not wish to overload his friendship.

BUT, Sir, the validity of the security was only a pretended, not the real blot in the contract. Mr Kemble had taken up the idea of making me a cypher. I was to be half the security, and that in *money down*, or a mortgage on landed property, yet I was to have nothing to say; I was not even in the smallest instance to have a power of control; I was to put myself in Mr Kemble's mercy, while I was sleeping, or unconscious of the danger, to run me hundreds of pounds in debt; to suffer him to lay plans, and connive at transactions, in which he might clear L. 1000 by the season, and leave me, on the winding up our accompts, a loser at the end.

THIS theory has already been verified by reality. He orders, without my consent or knowledge, a parcel of old scenes from New-castle, and professes to charge for them L. 400. I would not, Sir, had I been consulted, have
consented

consented to allow for them L. 20. I knew that pageantry, carried from town to town in the North of England, could never attract the attention of an Edinburgh audience, after they had seen the *Bastile* and *Captain Cook* in the Theatre Royal, and *Oscar and Malvina* in the Circus. My opinion has been proved to be well founded. There was more money taken at the Theatre, from the use of an eighteen-penny book, the *Road to Ruin*, than by all the Newcastle scenery, so pompously ushered into notice.

MR KEMBLE's arrogating to himself powers that neither the missive, nor any permission of mine ever gave him, is the sole obstacle to our compromise.

AFTER the bargain was concluded, by *my consent only*, for so he advertised, he was to be acting manager for the season. There is not a performer in the three kingdoms, that cannot in a moment define the office of acting manager. It is to regulate the company behind the curtain, and to carry into execution what had previously and privately been settled by the partners. This, Sir, I consented to,

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in the person of Mr Kemble, and from this I never expressed a wish to depart. But this I looked upon as a matter of courtesy, and not of right; for it was no part of the missive, and to nothing farther could I give my consent. Our agreement was a *joint and equal partnership*; such was it ever conceived by me. According to Mr Kemble's ideas, it was a partnership to be executed only by *one*. I might say, Sir, with a Right Honourable Friend of yours, it is an union founded upon reciprocity; but where the whole power is usurped by one, and submission only pointed out to the other, the reciprocity must certainly be all upon *one* side.

AN unequal junction of this kind, Sir, could never enter into my thought. No earthly consideration should ever have induced me to accept of a *sinécure*, or become an *annuitant*, in an undertaking where I had risked my all, and cringe beneath the man whose avowed intention was to found his fortune upon my expected and premeditated ruin.

AFTER the declarations that Mr Kemble has recently made, Sir, that he would take
care

care I should be a loser at the end of the season, or, at any rate, that I should be no gainer ; for that he would shut the house the moment the rent was paid, and not permit his sister to come down, or any other engagement to take place, in which I was to partake of the advantage. After such a declaration, I say, Sir, and in such circumstances, so widely different from the true intent of the missive, I cannot think of suffering any friend of mine to become security for me in so desperate a game*.

I HAD three powerful reasons, Sir, that inclined me to put up with many disagreeables, rather than decline a participation of the profits of the season. My own subsistence ; for I could not work, to beg I was ashamed. The education and support of a young family, and the interest of my creditors. For though they had consented to receive ten shillings only, yet, Sir, a composition never had
my

* From a conversation with the arbiter, at this period, Mr Kemble had taken up an idea that the agreement would have been enforced according to the original missive, he therefore thought proper to make the above declarations, at an interview with me, but not in presence of the arbiter.

my cordial assent. It was a temporary expedient, the act of necessity, a step in advance towards a situation that may possibly enable me to make farther payments. The deprivation, therefore, of my stipulated emoluments, is a diminution of the funds appropriated for that purpose; and the loss of a season, is the loss of the earnings of one year of my life, towards the extinguishment of honorary demands.

I SPEAK now, Sir, to your feelings. Had you been Mr Kemble, you would not have acted as Mr Kemble has done. You would not have said to yourself, I like the undertaking in which I am embarked; I see its advantages; my partner's embarrassments furnish me with a pretext; I will lay hold of the opening, and possess myself of the whole. You would not have taken every mode of adding to my difficulties; you would not have rendered me liable to the pressure of small demands, by unjustly withholding from me the means of discharging them.

You would not have dismissed a servant that had been with me twelve years, because
he

he had carried a message for me ; making use of the old adage, " You cannot serve two masters."

YOU would not have deprived Mr Bland of sixteen shillings of his weekly stipend*, contrary to an express agreement, because he was one of Mr Jackson's vermine ; an appellation which Mr Kemble had thought proper to affix to the members of my former company ; but Mr Jackson's vermine, have, amidst *his* noble animals, proved themselves Lords of the Forest.

YOU rather would have said, I see Mr Jackson is yet under some temporary embarrassments ; I will not add to them ; I will not start unnecessary obstacles ; I hold the security which in my own conscience I know I agreed to take ; I will commence the season, and we will mutually receive the settled stipend.

HAD an immediate loss taken place, you would then, Sir, have justly called upon my
security

* These are a few of Mr Kemble's *liberal* actions, during the course of the season. Mr Bland has had recourse to a Court of Justice, and has consequently recovered his arrears.

security for such pecuniary aid as would have made up the deficiency. If complied with, complaint would have been unnecessary ; if not, you would have found an easy, and an early mode of redress. And in either case, your conduct would have been consistent with your justice and humanity.

You would then have had the pleasure of acting up to the dictates you had professed, and I should have been relieved from a long list of mortifying and painful situations, the continuance of which, for another season, would have put a period to my existence.

To avoid that, for the sake of my family and myself, I must decline any farther intercourse with Mr Kemble, that I may have a chance of surviving a few winters longer, to have the honour of proving to you, how much I am,

SIR,

Your obedient servant,

J. JACKSON.

*The Honourable Henry Erskine,
Dean of Faculty.*

SECOND

LETTER to the Hon. HENRY ERSKINE,
Dean of Faculty.

Edinburgh, July 30. 1792.

SIR,

FROM your conversation yesterday, I cannot help being of opinion, that you either have never read the letter I had the honour of transmitting to you on the 18th of April, or that some passages in it have escaped your memory. I must therefore request of you, before you give a decision, which must at least be attended with unpleasing circumstances, that you will favour me with its refusal. I must beg leave of you likewise, Sir, as you wish for farther information, to lay the following circumstances before you, some of which have only come to my knowledge since I addressed you last.

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As early as the day of the contract, Mr Kemble pointedly declared, that I never should have any thing to do with the Theatre this season : That indeed there was an agreement, that on Mr Jackson's finding security, he was to be half concerned ; but that he would take care that no such security should be received ; for, continues he, " It must be such security as I am pleased with ; and I shall certainly point out such security only, as I know he cannot procure. It shall be money down, or a mortgage on a landed estate*."

THE day the house opened, a person, in my behoof, desired that Mr Gibb, the box-office keeper, would furnish him with a return of the night's receipt, a duplicate of which I had requested him to procure. Gibb's answer was, that Mr Kemble had given him positive orders to the contrary. On this refusal, Mr Kemble himself was asked the following morning, how much there was in the house ? He declared he would not tell ; for, says he, if I do, you will inform Mr Jackson : And his declarations through the season uniformly

* This extraordinary assertion is more minutely stated, page 294.

formly were, that I had nothing at all to do with the Theatre.

It had been expressly stipulated, that a box should be partitioned off, on the opposite side to the one I have so long used, for Mr Kemble. Orders were in consequence given to fit it up. As some other matters had employed the carpenters, it was not ready at the commencement of the season, as had been intended ; Mrs Jackson therefore desired Mr Kemble to be informed, that, as the box proposed for his use was not yet prepared, she requested him, till it was, to accept of hers. To this he replied, " Tell Mrs Jackson, that I shall accept of her box, when she has one to offer ; and I wonder she has not more delicacy than to think of coming into the house at all, where she has no right*." Mrs Jack-

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son,

* No cause can be assigned for Mr Kemble's sudden change of conduct towards Mr and Mrs Jackson, particularly the latter, but a premeditated design to break off all connections with them. They had parted on the most cordial and apparent friendly terms. Mr Kemble went to Newcastle, and Mr Jackson into Wales ; and no occurrence had happened, or transaction taken place, that could possibly, in Mr Jackson's absence, have extorted from Mr Kemble so unmanly and unwarranted a reply to Mrs Jackson's polite message.

son, it would be needless to add, has taken up no room in the Theatre since.

ON the carpenter's preparing to fit up the opposite box, as he had been directed, Mr Kemble ordered him to desist, saying, "One box is enough for one manager; I will not have it done."

THIS, Sir, was no arrangement of rehearsals; no acting managerial adjustment in the department I had consented for the season he should fill. It was a part of the agreement, expressly and mutually entered into, and as pointedly and almost instantly broken by Mr Kemble.

AND though, Sir, the being thrust out of a box, in the face of the servants, we had possessed more than ten years, may be deemed by you as a matter of no great consequence, yet, Sir, the going to the Theatre, me and my family, for a season, and the taking a friend with us, I must insist upon, was a money transaction; and the depriving me of that advantage, which must be estimated at some value,

value, was a violation of that part of the agreement, and consequently an infringement of the bargain altogether.

You were pleased, Sir, very early to signify, that my having informed Mr Kemble, by letter to him at Sheffield, that Mrs Atchmet was engaged, (which turned out to be a mistake of Mr Kemble's,) would have been a breach of the agreement on my side. How wide then must the fracture have been made by so many repeated instances on the other!

BUT, Sir, I assured you yesterday, and I repeat the assertion, I do not believe there is an actor, scene-shifter, servant, or runner, about the Theatre, that has not heard Mr Kemble say, that Mr Jackson had nothing to do with the house this year.

IF all these assertions, Sir, none of them imaginary, or from hearsay, are to be set aside by the bare negative of one, in opposition to the solemn declarations of others, that are ready to be substantiated by proof; or, if it is your opinion, contrary to that of every confidential friend I have spoken with on the subject, that
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an engagement broken, and that repeatedly, by one party, shall nevertheless remain binding upon the other, you will then, of course, determine, that the missive is still in force. In that case, it must be allowed, that if I have any thing to do with the lease of the Theatre for the next season, Mr Kemble, as before intended, is to be admitted to an equal share. For upon terms of equality only did I enter into a treaty with him, and never before or since have I, on any other conditions, expressed my consent to a connection with Mr Kemble.

“ A JOINT and equal concern,” are the words ; can there be a doubt in the expression ? For my own part, I can wrest it to no other meaning. As well might I make equality servility, or substance shadow.

BUT to leave argument upon a point where no reasoning can hold good, I must again declare to you, that the very unfeeling conduct (to use no harsher expression) towards myself and Mrs Jackson, in the situation we then were, has confirmed the opinion I originally entertained of him ; and I will sooner forego
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an interest in the lease of the Theatre for the next season altogether, than have any intercourse with that gentleman.

THESE, Sir, are my sentiments, and this my determination, for the rectitude of which I shall appeal to *God and the Public*. And however I may differ from you in opinion upon this subject, I am, with the greatest respect,

SIR,

Your obedient servant,

J. JACKSON.

*The Honourable Henry Erskine,
Dean of Faculty.*

S E C T. XIII.

*LETTER to the Right Honourable the Lord
Advocate of Scotland.*

Edinburgh, September 14. 1792.

MY LORD,

I NEVER entertained the most distant idea, of having occasion to recur to the transactions on the renewal of the patent, or to remind your Lordship of the purport of those conversations I was honoured with, by you, on that occasion. But from the supposed effects of the Dean of Faculty's decret-arbitral, respecting the present theatrical arrangements, I find myself, however unwillingly, under the necessity of renewing the subject.

FOR no crime alledged against me, that I ever heard of, the renewal of the patent, in the common form, was objected to; my right to it was proved, and allowed on all hands

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the length of time was at last the only objection. It was offered me by Sir Adam Ferguson, in my own name, for ten years. This I pointedly refused. Mr Walter Ross, who had an interest in the settlement, proposed, that it should be taken out in the names of the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas. He made it appear to me, in the clearest colours, that my right would suffer no infringement thereby, and that the only difference would be in the name. The English Council were of the same opinion. I therefore, personally, requested of the Duke and Mr Dundas to hold it. The rights of the proprietors of the Theatre were reserved, and it was perfectly understood that it was held for my use. The fees of office were paid by me, and I possessed the patent as fully ever since, as if my name had been inserted, and should, I am confident, have continued so to do without question, had not a derangement in my pecuniary matters taken place*.

It will be necessary, my Lord, here to observe, that this deficiency of supplies arose chiefly from the mode of taking out the patent; a consequence, which though it was not, might

* This subject has been fully discussed, Sect. VIII. p. 138.

might naturally have been foreseen. I had, Sir, in order to complete the theatrical plan, which I judged would be worth improvement, built a Theatre in Glasgow; laid out large sums upon the Edinburgh one; was erecting a third at Aberdeen, then thought necessary; and, in the interim, had never spared expences in procuring the first performers, frequently to the extent of, and sometimes even beyond the receipts*.

THIS obliged me to look out for an additional sum of money to answer immediate demands; it would easily have been procured to a larger amount than I had occasion for; but the security was the bar. The assignment of the patent was wanting. Other modes of relief were attempted, but before they could be carried into effect, a hasty creditor took (even for himself) an ill advised step: others of course pressed forward, and a sequestration was the unavoidable consequence.

Two years have since elapsed, during

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which

* These matters have been enlarged upon and explained, Sect. X. p. 177.

which period I have struggled through many painful and unpleasing trials. After, however, repeated, and the most accurate investigations, it has appeared, that the derangement of my money concerns arose from the greatness of the expence in which I was necessarily involved, in the execution of my theatrical plan.

CONVINCED of this truth, my creditors have accepted of a composition, which at the instance of my friends I was induced to offer, with the sole view of being enabled to regain a situation, which might put it in my power, at some future period, to convince them of my real motives for embracing the measure.

BEFORE the composition could be brought forward, the Theatre was taken for a year, by Mr S. Kemble, with whom, I need hardly inform you, I was by contract to have had a joint and equal concern ; but affecting to believe me totally out of the question, he threw me off, even before the season commenced, and the agreement in consequence has never been implemented.

Two

Two letters from me to the Dean of Faculty, will accompany this. They will let you into some lights, my Lord, respecting Mr Kemble's conduct, and my situation during last season.

FINDING it advantageous to continue the lease for a further term, and being at length convinced that it will be necessary in that case to take me along with him, Mr Kemble now offers to implement an agreement, which, for a season past, (like the bell-man of a country town) in the front of the Register-office, he has been bellowing to every passenger, that I had not the smallest concern in; nay, he professes himself willing to allow me the stipulated emoluments of the season, from which he had most wickedly and wantonly cut me off. But the time is past, my Lord, and it is not in the power of fate to recall it, neither is it in the power of man to wipe away the injuries I have sustained from Mr Kemble.

WHEN he beheld me in the gulph of affliction, he walked aloof; but when I unexpectedly reached the shore, he wished to hold out his hand, not with an intention to save,
but

but in the expectation of gaining another unguarded moment of shoving me in.

IN a more early period, at an accidental interview with Mr William Gibson, in the presence of the Dean of Faculty, when an union with the same party was proposed, I told him, that he might reduce me to the uttermost, and compell me to dig in a quarry for sixpence a day, which I would suffer with pleasure, rather than be compelled to a junction with Mr Kemble.

THIS declaration, though a harsh one, proceeded from the idea I had formed of his disposition, when he was a performer in my company; but on reasoning and considering coolly on the subject, I was induced to believe, that turbulence of temper I had at times observed, was the result of a tenaciousness of characters, and the arrangements of stage business, in which a manager and an actor frequently disagree, being actuated, the one by an anxious concern for the whole, the other by his own individual advantage.

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IN an independent and equal situation, I judged this tenacity might be laid aside, and as I was resolved in all points of business to give and take, I did not doubt but the season might pass away in that tranquillity, for which I most anxiously wished, and which at all events I was determined to promote. The result, however, Sir, has proved how ill founded my last opinion was, and how justly the former one had possessed my mind.

THUS my original resolution has been the more confirmed by experience; and I most solemnly declare, I would suffer any hardships, or submit to any situation, however humiliating, sooner than enter into any kind of connection for the future, with a man of such an unfeeling and savage disposition.

THE question will then be, Sir, whether the lessee, who has only rented the house for a season, and who, not possessed of a shilling of the property, must resign it in little more than a month, shall be permitted to thrust out the proprietor, who purchased the Theatre for a valuable consideration, and possessing it for ten years, all that time laboured
with

with unremitting pains to acquire the good opinion of the public, and whose greatest fault has avowedly been the adventuring too largely in their service. I should not hesitate my Lord, one moment, in referring this point to the decision of your justice.

WHEN formerly a set of gentlemen, with whom you then thought proper to act, expressed a desire to become conductors of the Theatre, speaking with your Lordship on the subject, I asked you, whether you would be instrumental in stripping me of my all, and turning me out, with a young family, into the world to seek our bread? Your reply was, that “you would sooner suffer your hand to be cut off.” And now, my Lord, on a similar occasion, when an effort is made to deprive me of one half of my expectations, you will not, I am confident, unless under the influence of deception, listen one moment to a proposal so confessedly unjust.

To remove that impulse of deception, my Lord, which the wiles of an interested individual will attempt to infuse, I take the liberty of troubling you with this. The jet of
his

his argument, on this head, I am apprised of, and shall find no difficulty to repel. For this purpose, though comparisons are disagreeable, at least to a party concerned, I must be under the necessity of making a reference to former seasons, comparative with the last.

FIRST, then, for my management.—Turn back your recollection with me, my Lord, to the period at which it commenced. I found the house, as it is well known, a mere wreck. There was not a scene that was fit for use. Even the roof was in ruins, and was necessarily renewed. As you sit in your box, my Lord, there is scarcely an article in view that was not of my placing.

CAST your eye, my Lord, upon the *Dramatis Personæ* of the performances of London. Is there, or has there been, a performer of eminence there, for the past ten years, that could be procured at any price, you have not seen? And some of them repeatedly. They have been supported by companies of performers likewise as respectable, or perhaps more so, than the nature of the scheme would permit.

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To

To this fact, Sir, I call the whole town as my evidence. Various attestations might be produced upon this point, from actors of the first magnitude, expressing their approbation of the conduct of the manager, and the attention of the company to them, and to the stage business. One instance shall suffice.

Saturday, June 12. 1784

SIR,

“My excessive hurry and fatigue, will, I hope, be an excuse to you and Mrs Jackson, for not paying my personal respects in St James’s Square. To both of you I remain indebted for all your politeness to me ; and I must beg of you, Sir, to make my acknowledgements to the whole company, for the very kind attention they have shewn to me, and to the business. An attention I shall ever be proud to remember.

I am, Sir, with Mr Siddons’ compliments,

Your sincere well-wisher,

And humble servant,

S. SIDDONS.”

J. Jackson Esq; St James’s Square.

LET

LET us now, my Lord, enquire into the merits of the management of last season, and where Mr Kemble's vast claim to pre-eminence consists; so vast indeed, as he himself holds forth, that he demands, without, with your leave, or by your leave, to step into, or, to use his own phrase, "to *fasten his claw* upon one half of that property," for which I have paid such sums, and struggled so many years to create.

FIRST, then, does he ground his pretended right on his expenditure upon the fabrick? To that account he cannot put down one shilling.

CAN he found his pretensions upon the superiority of his company? That would be arrogance in the extreme*.

I AM aware, my Lord, that he holds out I had deceived him with respect to a female engagement; that has been disproved, as your Lordship will observe in my first letter to the Dean of Faculty. The want of time is totally ill-founded; for I will venture to

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affirm,

* See a List of his company, with those of mine, Sect. V. P. 3094.

affirm, that from the second of November, when the lease commenced; to the nineteenth of January, when the house opened, I should (with the actors then engaged) have had one of the best companies last season that has been seen in Edinburgh. Had I retained the management, Mr Scriven, Mrs Atchmet, and Miss Wallis, would, with some other characters of merit, have been here.

MR KEMBLE'S chief dependence upon the favour of the public, is from the supposed greatness of the rent, and his prompt payment through the season, which has been officiously and erroneously asserted, even in the public prints, as "*altogether unexampled in the dramatic history of this place**."

THIS is a scandalous aspersion upon my predecessors, as well as myself, and I cannot suffer it to pass unconfuted. In the year 1762, when I was first here, Mr Love then manager, the salaries for the season were paid punctually.

Mr

* Herald, Monday June 11. 1792,

Mr Rofs paid *three* seasons.

Mr Foote paid *one*.

Mr Digges, before his misfortunes commenced, paid *four* years.

Mr Wilkinson paid *one*.

AND for *nine* seasons of my management, the performers were not only paid, but several of them, at the close of each season, frequently in my debt.

THAT arrears have accumulated, is but too serious a truth : but how have those debts been contracted ? Not for high living ; no one will accuse me of that. Not for equipages or servants. Not for tavern bills, or by gambling ; for I can safely say, that I never won or lost ten pounds in my whole life. Not for feasting or country excursions ; for I can only put down one day in the ten years, as fairly set apart for a jaunt of pleasure for my family.

No, my Lord, the accounts were *bona fide* run up in catering for the taste of the audience, in procuring and preparing for them
enter-

entertainments worthy their sitting down to ; from which they have frequently retired, acknowledging their repast had been delicious. You, my Lord, have sometimes partook of them, and confess your satisfaction at the novelty of the relish.

IN this, my Lord, I have gone somewhat beyond my powers, and for this I have repented in sackcloth and ashes ; it was an excess that I might have spared ; an offence solely against myself, for which, if I gain my own forgiveness, I shall not be apprehensive of not procuring that of the public : For the money, as it flowed from them, so was it expended for their use.

THIS failure of payments, my Lord, for one year, out of so many on my side, and Mr Kemble's promptitude in that respect for a single season, the only one he has been in Edinburgh, is affixed, without rhyme or reason, by Mr Kemble, and his friends, as the great criterion of his merit.

I SHALL

I SHALL meet him, Sir, fairly upon this ground; and before I make the calculation, I am bold enough to assert, that there has not passed a year of my management, that I have not paid more money in Edinburgh, exclusive of the arrears that may latterly have occurred, than on the same account has been issued by Mr Kemble.

THE rent of last year, Sir, it is well known, besides public burdens, was L.1200. This was the whole expence at which Mr Kemble stood in addition to the salaries and other current charges of each performance. His weekly salaries, including eight pounds a-week for himself and Mrs Kemble, amounted to L.53:0:0. But as I wish not in that scale to run too close, I shall rate them at L.60.

I WILL allow, on the other hand, that I had no rent to pay. But then, I had other demands, to which Mr Kemble was a stranger. My averaged salaries, for the last three years, were L.96:0:4; but as I have added to Mr Kemble, in the comparative statement, so I shall deduct

duct from my own, rating them only at L.90.

My salaries, upon an average, for ten years, were L.90 a-week, which is L.30 more than, upon the broadest calculation, those of Mr Kemble, for the last season, could possibly be rated.

A dead weight this of L.30 a week,			
will amount to in 30 weeks,	L.900	0	0
An original annuity to David Ross,	150	0	0
To Walter Ross, ditto, - -	100	0	0
Laid out annually on repairs, paint-			
ings, necessary incidents, and im-			
provements, never less than - -	300	0	0
Interest of money laid out upon the			
property, over and above the na-			
tural receipts, amounting to up-			
wards of L.5000, - -	250	0	0
	<hr/>		
	L.1700	0	0

Thus it evidently appears, that with a yearly receipt of L.1700, over and above the current charges, Mr Kemble would pocket L.500, whilst I, with my additional expence, must have sat down without a shilling.

IF

IF the clearance averaged L. 1200 only, in that case Mr Kemble would receive his benefits and salaries free, while I must have been saddled with L. 500 debt.

I CANNOT with precision ascertain the receipts of the season, as Mr Kemble had issued previous orders to his box-keeper to give me no information on that head: but with the advantage of Mrs Siddons in the after season, and the smallness of his salaries, particularly at that period, his clearance, on the close of his accounts, must have been considerable*, and his finances were certainly in such a state, as to enable him, without inconvenience, to discharge his rent and salaries pointedly.

It is from this circumstance that Mr Kemble deduces his pretended inherent right of pre-eminence. For the maintaining a promptitude of payment for a single year, and that by curtailing the averaged salaries of the performers

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* According to the best account I could get, Mr Kemble's profits last season were from L. 600 to L. 800.

formers L. 30 a-week, and consequently thereby producing to the public one of the worst companies that has been seen in Edinburgh during the course of my memory.

HAD Mr Kemble stepped nobly forward, had he augmented the salary list, exhibited an unrivalled company, and by those exertions fallen into arrears, as many hundreds as he has obviously cleared, I could then have comprehended some pretext for a preferable claim of continuance, till, in some measure, he might have made up the losses he had sustained.

BUT on the very opposite principles he founds his axiom: I have possessed the Theatres for a year, says he; I have gained handsomely by them, and therefore I will compel the holder of the property to grant me a further lease. His views do not even stop here. He not only requires a preference in the lease for his great services, at half its value, but to be possessed of half the property for ever.

A CLAIM

A CLAIM so curious, and extravagantly chimerical, can be equalled by nothing but his visionary notions of enforcing his demand. Conscious of not having the law on his side, he purposed to call in the controul of the patent to his aid, which he supposes superior to every legal operation. But if the powers of the patent are competent to controul the decrees of law, I trust there is a greatness and goodness of heart in the holders of it, that will repress its encroachments upon right and property.

IN a feudal court, formerly, where the will of the tyrant was the peoples law, an avowal of this kind might perhaps be forced down the throats of the hearers, as a principle both rational and just; but in a land of liberty, where there are both law and equity, it can never stand a serious hearing. However, as it has been seriously taken up, it shall be seriously treated.

SOME respectable gentlemen, as I before observed, were the possessors of the theatrical property in the Canongate; they sold that property, with the patent which they had obtain-

ed, to David Ross; and David Ross to J. Jackson.

MORE than 20 years ago, the Edinburgh Theatre alone was let to Mr Foote for 500 guineas a-year, afterwards to Mr Digges for the same sum. Some thousand pounds, Sir, have been expended upon the house since that period; and the Glasgow Theatre built by me, which would let separate from a 100 to 200 a-year, is now become an appendage to it.

Is that, Sir, to be thrown in for nothing? Shall the long lapse of time, the encrease of value in all kinds of property, the expence of the articles of life, and particularly, the augmentation of audiences, be of no additional weight in the scale?

THE value of property rises or falls with circumstances, and is consequently not to be limited, or ascertained: I presume, my Lord, it is constantly worth what it will bring.

SUPPOSE,

SUPPOSE, my Lord, an estate had, at the owner's expence, been divided, fenced and limed, and by improved modes of agriculture, so brought into heart, that instead of L. 500 a year, it should fetch a thousand; and supposing the tenant who rented it after such improvement for a year, should say to the landlord, "I will not permit you to let your farm to any one else; I will continue in spite of you and law: And I will not only continue, but I will cut down your rent more than one half. Instead of L. 1200, I shall only allow you L. 500; and that for my life, if I chuse to be your tenant so long."

I SHOULD wish to hear your Lordship's reply to any one of your tenants, presuming, in respect to your property, to make such a declaration. What would be the answer of Messrs Sheridan or Harris, to an individual in London, that should venture to broach so new a doctrine?

WHEN the property of Covent Garden was in its infancy, a rent of L. 500, at that early period, might perhaps have been deemed sufficient;

ficient; but augmented in value to L. 80,000; would that man be supposed in his senses that should say, you shall not let that vast property for more than L. 500 a-year?

THE limitation of theatrical property, as in any other line, must be ruinous to the proprietors, and detrimental to the interests of the community. For a stagnation of improvement will naturally produce a deduction of the nightly profits.

Few adventurers, I believe, would be found so possessed of the *amor patriæ*, as to lay out their money, not only without hopes of advantage, but with the moral certainty of loss.

I WAS emulous, Sir, to see the theatrical arrangements of Scotland on as consequential a footing as the respectability of the audience deserved: with this view I was forming some extensive plans for their accommodation, as well as their amusements, for which purpose I expended every shilling I could procure, and stretched my credit to the uttermost, in order to promote the desired object.

I WISH

I WISH not here to arrogate to myself so much merit; as even to hint that I made these exertions solely through the respect I bore the profession or the public. I should have been a bad father, and an unjust husband, had I thus thrown in my earnings, without some expectation of a return.

AN accumulation of property, and a right to retain it, were, I must confess, my predominating excitements to the extending its value. From an opposite motive, how different must have been my conduct! Attentive to the profits only, I should have neglected even the annual repairs of the building, and run it out to the mere wreck in which I found it.

THIS, my Lord, is a maxim so obvious and so generally admitted, that I know not, whether I may not have incurred your censure, for thinking it necessary thus to signify its effects. Under the influence, Sir, of this consideration, I should have been tempted here to close the subject; but from your Lordship's recent conversation with Messrs Watson and Playfair,

Playfair, I find myself under the necessity of taking notice of the merits of the decret-arbitral, upon which so much stress seems to be laid.

I CALLED at your Lordship's house some time ago, but had not the honour of finding you at home. My design then was to have requested you would not form an opinion upon the subject, without hearing my statement of the matter,

Audi alteram partem, I ever presumed to believe a given maxim, which no distinguished personage in a judicial capacity ought ever to lose sight of; and I could not entertain the smallest suspicion, that on this, or any other occasion, you would not adhere to that golden rule.

READ, Sir, I intreat of you, the short and simple missive in question; I have annexed it for that purpose, with the decret-arbitral deduced therefrom, and some apposite observations upon both. You have only to read, my Lord, I flatter myself, to be convinced.

The

The truths in my two letters to the Dean of Faculty, mentioned in his decret, which also accompany this, must carry with them their own weight.

I HAVE the honour to be, with the highest respect,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient servant,

J. JACKSON.

*The Right Honourable
The Lord Advocate for Scotland.*

SOME ineffectual meetings, during the course of the season, having been held, before the arbiter, upon the subject in question, on the 19th of August 1792, the decret-arbitral was given: the purport of which, in seven counts, with observations thereon, is hereunto subjoined.

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SECT.

S E C T. XIV.

PURPORT

OF THE

DECREET-ARBITRAL*.

FIRST. The Honourable Arbiter, finds, That during the continuance of the joint concern, Mr Kemble shall have the sole right of engaging performers, and of being acting-manager; giving notice to Mr Jackson of what engagements he meant to make; and if any damage shall arise from such engagements, if objected to by the said John Jackson, the same to be made good by the said Stephen Kemble: the loss to be affixed by neutral persons, to be chosen by each party.

DECREET-

* The missive upon which this decret arbitral is founded, and which it was meant to substantiate, is inserted *verbatim*, Sect. XII. page 202.

S E C T. XIV.

OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

FIRST. No such stipulation was ever entered into, either in writing or verbally; only through courtesy, not as a matter of right, Mr Jackson consented, that till his affairs were settled, which he supposed might take up the whole season, Mr Kemble should officiate as acting manager. But this the said J. Jackson considered, and declared at the time, both in conversation, and by *letter to Mr Kemble*, to be only optional on his side, and no part of the agreement; and by no means to be extended to another season, provided the parties continued together, unless Mr Kemble's management should be approved of by the said J. Jackson, and he should consent to a continuance of the same: So Mr Kemble at the time understood it, and so he expressed

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HISTORY OF
DECREET-ARBITRAL.

OBSERVATIONS.

it in his first advertisement to the public. So was it likewise pointedly stipulated in the scroll drawn up by Mr Playfair. A pleasant kind of theatrical partnership it must have been, where every engagement, or ideal profit, or loss, must have been liable to be settled by an eight months arbitration, or an expensive law plea,

BUT no restriction is placed by the Honourable Arbitrator upon a more consequential part of the business than that of the salary of an actor of perhaps fifteen shillings a-week, which might have merited at least the chance of an arbitration; that is, a controul in money matters. Mr Kemble is left at large to erect castles on the stage, or build castles in the air, at an unlimited expence; or he may bring his pageants, that have been exhibited through the various country towns in England; or produce old scenes from Newcastle, that originally cost him L.5, and charge for them L.500. Mr Jackson could have no remedy from the decreet-arbitral, but acquiescence. Does this constitute *an equal concern*?

SECONDLY.

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

SECONDLY. That it was not in the power of the said S. Kemble, to defeat the rights of the said J. Jackson, to an equal share, in consequence of any delay on the part of the said J. Jackson to find the stipulated security, without a declaration from the arbiter, that he was entitled so to do. And that it was not in the power of the said J. Jackson to free himself of the said obligation, by refusing, or delaying to find the said security,

THIRDLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

SECONDLY. Mr Kemble did however *find the means* of defeating this opinion of the arbiter's ; for the season passed away, and the Theatre closed, without the said J. Jackson being permitted to receive any part of the stipulated terms.

MR JACKSON never did refuse to give the stated security, provided the terms of the missive had been fairly and honourably adhered to ; nor did he shew the least desire to recede from the contract, till Mr Kemble had broke through the agreement in every instance ; and till the season was so far exhausted, as to render any competent recompence for the injuries Mr Jackson had sustained by the delay, impossible.

THE security expressly agreed upon, was repeatedly offered, and every exertion made on the part of the said J. Jackson, to procure a participation of the joint concern in the Theatre, according to the meaning and precise terms of the original agreement, but was constantly refused.

THIRDLY.

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

THIRDLY. Finds, that none of the facts condescended on by the said J. Jackson, particularly in two letters by him to the Dean of Faculty, are relevant to infer a departure on the side of the said S. Kemble from the agreement, or to enable the said J. Jackson to be free of the contract.

HE farther finds, that in all the subsequent submissions, and conversations with the arbiter, that Mr Jackson insisted on his right to have his bond of caution accepted, and his right to half of the emoluments of the season declared: and that the plea, taken up at the *latest hour* of the business, of being free from the contract, was unjust, and could not be sustained.

FOURTHLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

THIRDLY. Was the rejecting the stipulated security, no breach of contract? Was the withholding the weekly allowance; a deprivation of benefits; a refusal to participate to Mr Jackson one half of the profits of the season; the excluding his family from their box; and declaring through the whole season, that the said J. Jackson had *nothing to do* in the concern: were these, and many other injuries and insults, too numerous to mention, no breaches of agreement?

MR JACKSON did certainly use every means in his power, to bring Mr Kemble to a fair and equitable accommodation, at the commencement, and during a great part of the season. But after he found all was in vain, and after declarations from the said S. Kemble, inimical in every syllable towards the establishing a friendly intercourse; particularly his asserting, that he would take care to run Mr Jackson in debt before the end of the season; (a thing very easy to accomplish in the adjustment of accompts, where there was to be no controll); and after his affirming,

* M m that

HISTORY OF
DECREET-ARBITRAL.

FOURTHLY. He finds, the season being finished without loss, the delay that took place, as to the sufficiency of the caution offered by the said J. Jackson, would be attended with no loss to the said S. Kemble.

THEREFORE,

OBSERVATIONS.

that if the said J. Jackson was to have any concern in the profits, he would shut the house the moment the rent was paid, and not suffer his sister to come down, so as to participate any advantage to Mr Jackson.

THEN indeed Mr Jackson did declare to the arbiter, in writing, that he could not think of giving any security, or of having farther intercourse with Mr Kemble; as believing the agreement infringed upon and broken altogether, on the side of the said S. Kemble. This was on the 18th day of April, which could not be called the *latest hour* of the business, as the decret-arbitral was not given till August 9th, a space of near four months after.

FOURTHLY. The delay was not on Mr Jackson's side, but obviously on that of Mr Kemble, in not accepting of the security, agreed upon originally, and so settled by him, before his departure from Edinburgh.

MR JACKSON did offer the security as originally settled, but it appears that Mr Kemble, after his arrival at Sheffield, had

* M m 2 been

DECREET ARBITRAL.

THEREFORE, with consent of the said S. Kemble, finds the said J. Jackson entitled to one half of the free profits of the Theatre, without making any allowance to the said S. Kemble, or Mrs Kemble his wife, for their performance.

BUT under the special proviso, that in case the said J. Jackson shall not, within fourteen days, agree to implement this decreet-arbitral, *and every part thereof*, he shall cease to have any right to a share of his profits of the present year; and in case he should afterwards acquiesce, or be compelled to perform his part thereof, by course of law; in that case he finds, that four pounds a-week to Mr Kemble, and the same to his wife, shall be deducted out of the said J. Jackson's share of the profits of the season.

FIFTHLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

been induced to recede from that part of the agreement. He says in a letter to Mr Jackson, from thence, " I am directed by my friends, not to accept of any security but such as Mr Gibson shall think sufficient."

How does it appear that the season passed without loss? The fact certainly was so, but Mr Kemble has been careful hitherto to shew no accompts of those profits to Mr Jackson. The arbiter does not say that he saw any such accompts; and his decret neglects to ascertain the amount.

SHOULD Mr Kemble refuse to implement his part of the decret-arbitral, the arbiter finds no penalty against him. No *vice versa* in that case, of four pounds a-week to Mr Jackson and his wife, to be deducted out of Mr Kemble's half profits. The arbiter takes no notice of, and gives no recompence for the loss and distress the said J. Jackson suffered by being deprived of his salary, at a time when Mr Kemble knew well, that it was the only resource the said J. Jackson then had, for the daily subsistence of himself and family.

FIFTHLY.

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

FIFTHLY. He finds the said S. Kemble, and the said J. Jackson, bound to continue a joint concern in the Theatre in *time coming, precisely* on the same terms as for the present year, That is to say, on an equal participation of the free profits, finding caution for performance, &c. &c.

AND

OBSERVATIONS.

FIFTHLY. How can this article be enforced or fulfilled? The house is at the disposal of the trustee for the creditors; it was offered by him to Mr Kemble for the same rent, and refused. He was informed that other offers were made, and would be accepted, but he chose to remain silent.

THE house was accordingly advertised in the public papers both in Edinburgh and London, and taken by Mrs Esten at L. 1000. Mr Kemble afterwards offered L. 500, which of course was declined.

CAN the decret-arbitral then compel an impossibility? Or how is this part of it conformable to the missive? That expressly says, if either *inclines*, he shall be entitled to the same share in *time coming*. Does the word *incline* signify *you shall*, or can the term *option* be converted into *compulsion*? Or, could that difficulty be got over, the Theatre is now *let*, irredeemably so, and consequently, either of the parties concerned being lessee, is rendered impossible.

HERE

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

AND in case the said J. Jackson shall, by a settlement with his creditors, or otherwise, regain possession of the Theatre, he shall be bound and obliged to communicate the same to the joint concern, upon receiving L. 500 a-year rent for the two Theatres of Edinburgh and Glasgow, or such greater sum, as shall be fixed on by his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, and the Right Honourable Henry Dundas.

SIXTHLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

HERE is a stretch of power, according to my humble conception, totally inconsistent with law. It is no less, than the wresting by violence, L. 500 a-year, out of the hands of the proprietor.

THIS is also in direct violation of the former part of this very fifth article, which says, that the parties shall continue "precisely upon the same footing as the present year." Now to be *precisely upon the same footing*, they must enter upon the same terms; that is, a tack of the Theatres at L. 1200 a-year rent. Or they must be put up to roup, and fetch what they will bring. If the parties then become tacksmen, they will enter upon the same equal terms.

THE idea of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, or the Right Honourable Mr Dundas, becoming arbiters, or assessors, of the rent of a Theatre, is inconsistent. They never would step forward by a strong hand, to deprive a set of creditors from making the most of an

N n estate

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

OBSERVATIONS.

estate vested in them ; or to prevent the sureties from making good their obligations, by getting the same rent for a property, which it formerly brought ; or at least, as much as it would fairly and openly fetch.

THIS article is likewise beyond measure *ultra vires*, as never so much as hinted at in the missive, and consequently totally out of the question. It is also obviously unequal. The sum, which it must cost Mr Jackson to regain possession of his property, will amount to L. 7000. Of this, by the decret-arbitral, he is to give Mr Kemble the one half.

Now suppose the Theatre was to be sold, and Mr Kemble should become the purchaser, is there any clause in the decret-arbitral, that shall compel Mr Kemble to participate to Mr Jackson, the one half of the property ? Where then can be the equality, or the impartiality, of this part of the decret-arbitral ?

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SIXTHLY.

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

SIXTHLY. Finds, that it shall not be competent to the person refusing to bid for, or become lessee of the Theatre, in opposition to the party willing. And repeats, in case the said J. Jackson regain possession of the Theatre, and refuses to obtemper this decret-arbitral, he shall be bound and obliged to let the same to the said S. Kemble, for a rent of L. 500 a-year, till he shall chuse to take a joint concern with him.

SEVENTHLY, Decrees and ordains the party refusing to pay a fine of L. 500 Sterling, by and attour performance.

OBSERVATIONS.

SIXTHLY. This is rendered unnecessary, as the Theatre is let, and cannot therefore be bid for, by one, or the other. The latter part of this article is answered in the objections to the fifth count.

SEVENTHLY. It is left to the learned in the law to determine, how far a penalty is here competent, as no such thing is mentioned in the missive; and, if consistent with the agreement, on which side should the forfeit be levied? shall it be upon him who has been forcibly thrust out of the concern, and deprived of every participation of advantage! resulting therefrom? or upon the one who has enjoyed the whole emoluments of the season, without the smallest hinderance or molestation from the injured party?

IT

It should here be observed, that the most material part of the agreement in the *missive*, is never hinted at in the *decreet-arbitral*, viz. That the profits shall be divided weekly. No provision is made for, or the least notice taken of this clause.

AND although, by Mr Kemble's *own state* of the agreement, drawn up by his own man of business, and by his own particular order, eight pounds a-week, and two *clear benefits*, were to have been enjoyed by Mr Jackson, so as to have placed him upon terms of equality with Mr Kemble; yet, deprived of these advantages, which, the benefits particularly *in his situation*, could not have been of very inconsiderable import, no recompence, not the smallest acknowledgement, or restitution, is allowed, or the least notice taken of these deprivations or losses by the arbiter. Can this award be deemed rational or reciprocal?

IN short, the Honourable Arbiter, instead of deciding upon the joint *missives*, between the parties concerned, has formed an ENTIRE NEW AGREEMENT, composed of articles never so much as dreamt of by them at the time of exchanging those *missives*; and which, thro' its whole tenor, bears not the smallest similitude to the true spirit of the *original contract*.

S E C T. XV.

*Treaty with Mrs Atchmet—Her character as
an actress—Value of divided property explained
—Mr Colman's share of Covent Garden—
Explanatory remarks.*

ON a reperusal of the foregoing sheets, I find it expedient to subjoin a few pages, not only by way of explanation, but also to add fresh matter, which had either escaped my attention, or had not sooner come to my knowledge. In my first address to the Dean of Faculty, I mentioned Mrs Atchmet; concerning whom, as the business had been discussed before the arbiter, and as my observations to him on that occasion were intended for his perusal only, the passage, to a general reader, must therefore appear somewhat obscure, and consequently demands an explanation.

At the time of my agreement with Mr
Kemble,

Kemble, among the performers engaged to me for the season, I mentioned Mrs Atchmet. I told him that she was *not* in articles, for reasons I particularly mentioned, and which have been already explained ; but that I looked upon her being with me as a certainty. Mr Kemble enquired Mrs Atchmet's salary. I told him I had proposed four pounds a-week. He replied, it was too much, and " hoped in God she would not come ; for," says he, " she is exactly in Mrs Kemble's and Mrs Whitlock's way, and what shall we do with her ?" It was agreed upon, that I should write, and give him the earliest intimation of her resolves. I did so. My letter informed him, that she thought the salary too little. I added, meaning thereby that he might have an opportunity, if he chose it, of making her a farther offer, *she was at Shrewsbury* ; and, in the instant, I was not a little pleased that I had it in my power to relieve him from an engagement he then deemed so great a burthen.

At our first interview with the *arbiter*, when every thing *seemed* to be in a fair way of adjustment, Mr Kemble unexpectedly,

tedly, and, I am sure, very unjustly, laid to my charge the weakness of his then company, affirming, that in a letter to him at Sheffield, which he would produce in *half an hour*, I had expressly declared, that Mrs Atchmet, was engaged. I pointedly denied the assertion. The Dean at the time thought the matter of such consequence, as to adjourn the meeting, and to give a *written order* that the letters respecting Mrs Atchmet should be produced by both parties. I complied*. Mr Kemble did not. The charge therefore which he had thought proper at

O o

that

* Letters from Mrs Atchmet to Mr Jackson, produced to the arbiter.

London, May 4. 1791.

DEAR SIR,

"FROM a knowledge of your character, and a strong wish I have long had, to pay a visit to Scotland, when you have a vacancy fit for me, I would be happy to have a situation on your stage. As to salary, we *can't* differ, as I would leave that *entirely to yourself*. I request my compliments to Mrs Jackson.

C. ANN ATCHMET."

No. 7. Arundel-street, Strand.

I REPLIED, that I should be happy to see her in Edinburgh, and would give her a salary equal to her merit. I also left it to her option, if she was not engaged in the summer, to join the company at Aberdeen. This Mrs Atchmet declined, as she did not chuse to come so far north ; but accepted
of

that period to alledge against me, was not substantiated ; and the blame for any deficiency in the company of 1792, must consequently be all *his own*.

WITH respect to Mrs Atchmet's motive for changing her intention of paying a visit to Edinburgh, I leave it to the decision of the reader, on comparing her two letters in the notes, which are inserted for that purpose.

Mrs Atchmet, of whom I am speaking, was a pupil of Mr Whyte's, an eminent schoolmaster

of my offer at Edinburgh, and wished to be informed when the house opened. In this situation matters stood, when my agreement with Mr Kemble took place. On Mrs Atchmet's being acquainted with the salary I proposed, and the *change of management*, I was favoured with the following letter :—

Shrewsbury, November 14 1791.

DEAR SIR,

" I BELIEVE you must be sensible it would not be in my power to undertake such a journey, and provide such dresses as I wear, for the terms you have offered. I beg you will make my compliments, and thanks acceptable to Mrs Jackson, for her polite offer of attention. And am,

Your obliged,

C. ANN ATCHMET."

J. Jackson, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

ter in Dublin*. She made her first appearance on the Crow-street stage in that city, in the part of *Imoinda*. I was accidentally one of the audience that evening. Her figure was unexceptionable, and her abilities promising. She succeeded in the profession; and continued upon the same Theatre, supplying a principal line of characters, for some seasons. I saw her afterwards in *Sir Harry Wildair*. She looked the easy elegant man of fashion, and her performance through the part was pleasing. Her cast is soft tragedy and genteel comedy.

My not acceding to the terms of Mr Bisset's scroll, as altered from the original misfive, was not because I wished to interfere in the stage management for the season; that I had by choice declined, having occasion to attend to matters of another nature. My objection was founded upon very different principles; it was, because I could not bring myself to consent to a reduction of a reverfionary property of confiderable value.

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THE

* Samuel Whyte, Esq; preceptor of the grammar school, Grafton-street, Dublin.

THE property of a Theatre, divided into shares, with the *right of management* tacked only to *one*; that individual share, so advantaged, becomes of infinitely more value than any of the others. Few theatrical people would wish to embark in a scheme where they could have no sway in the conduct of it; and where their money must be hazarded upon the caprice of another.

As an instance of the validity of the above reasoning, I shall beg leave to observe, that when Mr Colman retired from the management of Covent Garden Theatre, the quarter shares, of which he possessed one, were estimated at about L.15,000 each. But the right of management, being an appendage by an original contract to Mr Colman's share, it consequently sold for more than L.20,000. If my information was correct at the time, I think the purchase was L.22,000.

By the same rule, the theatrical property of Edinburgh, being divided into halves, and the *right of management* attached to one of them, that half, so circumstanced, will be of course, at least one third more valuable than the other. The idea, therefore, that I, who was
so

so well acquainted with theatrical matters, should run with my eyes open into so ruinous a measure, can only be equalled in absurdity, by holding out, that when I was going to enter into a partnership for a year in the rent of a house, I was bargaining to alienate the one half of the property, and expectations of myself and family, *for ever*.

“ ————— *Credat Judeus appella.*”

No such thing was ever spoke of, or hinted, by either myself or Mr Kemble, at the time of exchanging the missives ; nor had I heard the least suggestion of so extraordinary a claim, at the time I addressed my two letters to the arbiter ; the subject, of course, was not mentioned in either of them ; nor till I read the scroll of the decret, had I the least notion that such an extravagant idea could be started ; and therefore had no previous opportunity of discussing the question.

It will be necessary, before I take leave of the subject, to apprise the reader, that while my affairs with my creditors remained unsettled, Mr Kemble, who had contrived to make himself *sole* in the lease, invariably objected to my having any concern with him ;
but

but no sooner had I settled the composition, and had a prospect of regaining possession of my property, than he began to change his *tone*. He then consented to allow me to become a partner with him, on certain conditions, in the *past season*, provided I would give up to him one half of *my property for ever*. Is it possible for any impartial reader to blame me for declining a bargain so confessedly unequal?

WHILE my composition was pending, Mr Kemble used every effort in his power to *prevent it*; and when he was at last informed, that, contrary to his expectations, it was completed, he exclaimed, "I could never have thought it: That is the worst news I have heard since I came to Edinburgh *!"

READER,

* It is evident, that when Mr Kemble, with his usual *liberality* and *candour*, made this very Christian-like declaration, he had not the smallest idea of possessing a claim upon my property. His views of equalization had not at that period been so far advanced. From November 2. to March the 16th, when he was pleased to make that singular declaration, was a space of fourteen weeks, during all which time Mr Kemble had not imbibed the new light of an equal participation. He would otherwise have exclaimed, with propriety, "That is the *best news* I have heard!" For so it must have been, if my agreement had obliged me to *divide* the property between us.

READER, COMMENT UPON THAT !

THE worst news that Mr Kemble had heard since he came to Edinburgh was, that a man in misfortunes should be able to compromise with his creditors, and retain bread for his children. To a mind, susceptible of so uncharitable an idea, I should recommend the following lines of a great poet :—

“ Ne’er be elated, while one man’s oppress’d ;

“ Never dejected, while another’s blest’d.”

REPORTS having been industriously circulated, that the lease of the Theatre, for the present year, had been privately let to Mrs Esten, with an intention to disappoint Mr Kemble’s right, under the decret-arbitral ; and that I had stipulated a participation of the profits under that lease, in the same manner as I should have been entitled to from him, had he fulfilled his agreement with me ; I find it necessary, in explaining my transactions with Mr Kemble, to contradict those reports ; and, by permission of the trustee, to recount the circumstances attending Mrs Esten’s lease, in which I have no interest or
concern

concern whatever, farther than the advantage which may result from the rent, after the composition to my creditors shall be satisfied.

I SHALL candidly confess, that the principles of the decret appeared to me so very different from the intention of the original agreement, that I had determined to have no concern in a future lease of the Theatre, rather than be involved in a partnership, upon terms so very unequal, and from which I plainly foresaw the most ruinous consequences; and this my intention, as the reader has been informed, I communicated both to the arbiter and Mr Kemble, before the decree was issued; at the same time, I must declare, that had it been in my power, which it was not, I would not have used any interest to prevent his getting the lease, as the highest bidder; at an inferior rent, I certainly should. For whatever my private opinion of Mr Kemble's mode of acting might be, my own, and my family's interest, was interwoven with that of my creditors; and it is obvious, the higher the rent, the sooner these would be paid, and those once more provided for.

IN

IN my presence, long before the time for letting a new lease, he was offered the Theatre for one, or, I believe, for two years, at the same rent ; but, for reasons not then divulged, he declined the proposal.

It appeared, that by paragraphs, industriously circulated in the London papers, where a competition for a lease of the Theatre was only to be expected, that effectual measures had been used to prevent any theatrical person from offering, provided a public sale had taken place ; and from what afterwards happened, it was evident that Mr Kemble had formed a plan to procure the lease at a rent of L. 500 : or at least, that the holders of the patent should fix the rent, instead of allowing the Theatres, like any other property, to bring a fair price in the market ; a plan which Mr Kemble had no title to insist upon, more than any other person whatsoever ; and which, I have no doubt, from the annexed papers, will appear in itself unjust.

AT a general meeting of creditors, held the 21st of July last, these facts were stated, when the trustees were authorised to let the Theatres,

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either

either by public roup or private bargain, as they should judge necessary ; and at this meeting Mr Kemble's agent was present. The lease was immediately advertised in the different Edinburgh papers, and in some of those in London.

THE trustees having received no offer from Mr Kemble, entered into an agreement with Mrs Esten ; and the report of their conduct was communicated to the creditors, at a meeting called for that purpose, on the 3d of September, where a memorial, containing a statement of the transaction, was laid before them*.

THE creditors, after considering this memorial, with every objection that Mr Kemble's agent could suggest, approved of the proceedings of the trustees, and authorised them to carry the transaction into effect ; to publish their approbation in the newspapers, and to transmit a memorial of the case to the Duke of Hamilton and the Right Honourable Mr Dundas, as holders of the patent.

It may be proper to inform the public, that the Duke gave a direct consent to the lease,

* See Appendix, No. XI.

lease, and Mr Dundas, the other trustee, has declared in writing, that he will not interfere in the matter on the present occasion.

THE reader will not probably be inclined to believe, that Mr Kemble could form so wild a scheme, as that of compelling a body of creditors to accept of a rent which was inadequate to the value of the subject, from which they were to expect payment, and, of course, to enrich himself at their expence. That he, however, did so, appears from his letter to the trustees, whose reply, for the reasons there stated, put a direct negative upon it.

I SHALL request the reader to decide whether the trustee, in justice to the trust reposed in him, could have acted otherwise. I must certainly have deemed his conduct highly reprehensible, had he accepted of L.500 from any person whatsoever, when he could have procured L.1000. And I can hardly suppose there is a single creditor, or a disinterested individual among the world at large, that would dissent from this opinion.

WHETHER Mr Kemble's claim intitles him to the support of the public, in pretending to open a Theatre, in opposition to that established by law, which has served for the entertainment of this metropolis for almost thirty years, and which he has publicly advertised his intention of doing, contrary to the existing laws of the kingdom, I leave to the reader's determination. In order to be enabled to decide upon the subject with precision, I am humbly of opinion, that I cannot conclude the present subject better, than by laying before the public an abstract of the penal statutes relating to theatrical representations in Scotland.

STATUTE, 12th QUEEN ANNE,

ENTITLED, "An act for the more effectual punishing rogues, vagabonds, sturdy-beggars, and vagrants."

"THAT all persons pretending themselves to be patent-gatherers, or collectors for prisons, goals or hospitals, and wandering abroad for that purpose; all fencers, bear-wards, common players of interludes, minstrels, jugglers, &c. &c. shall be deemed rogues and vagabonds."

"THAT

“ THAT any person apprehended as a rogue or a vagabond, may, if the justice or justices think proper, be ordered to be stripped naked from the middle, and openly whipped, until his or her body be bloody ; or may be sent to the house of correction, there to be kept at hard labour ; or to the common goal of the said county, there to remain until the next quarter session, to be holden for the said county.”

10th GEORGE II. *February 1. 1736.*

“ WHEREAS, by an act of parliament made in the twelfth year of her late majesty Queen Anne, it was enacted, “ That all persons pretending themselves to be patent-gatherers, or collectors for prisons, goals, or hospitals ; all fencers, bear-wards, common players of interludes, and other persons therein named and expressed, shall be deemed rogues and vagabonds.

“ AND whereas some doubts have arisen, concerning so much of the said act as relates to common players of interludes ; now, for explaining and amending the same, be it declared and enacted, that from and after the

24th

24th day of June 1737, any person who shall for hire, gain, or reward, act, represent, or perform, or cause to be acted, represented, or performed, any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or other entertainment of the stage, or any part or parts thereof, in case such person shall not have any legal settlement in the place, where the same shall be acted, represented or performed, without authority, by virtue of letters patent from his Majesty, or a licence from the Lord Chamberlain, shall be deemed a rogue and a vagabond, and shall be liable to all such penalties and punishments as are appointed by the said act.

“ AND be it further enacted, that if any person *having*, or *not having*, a legal settlement as aforesaid, shall, for hire, gain, or reward, act, represent, or perform, or cause to be performed, &c. Every such person shall, for such offence, forfeit the sum of fifty pounds. And, in case the fifty pounds be paid, such offender shall not, for the same offence, suffer any of the pains or penalties inflicted by the said recited act.”

“ AND

"AND for offences committed in that part of Great Britain, called Scotland, by action of summary complaint before the Court of Session or Justiciary there; or for offences committed in any part of Great Britain, in a summary way, before two justices of the peace, for any county or place where the offence shall be committed, by the oath or oaths of *one* or more witnesses, to be levied by distress, the overplus to be returned; and for want of effects, to be put to the house of correction, or county goal, to hard labour, for any time not exceeding six months: one half of the penalty to the informer, the other to the poor of the parish.

10th GEORGE III. c. 27.

"AND, whereas a licenced play-house is much wanted in that part of the united kingdom called Scotland, be it therefore further enacted, That it shall and may be lawful to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, to grant letters patent, for establishing a theatre or play-house in the city of Edinburgh, or suburbs thereof, which shall be intitled to all the privileges, and subjected to all the regulations to which any
theatre

theatre or play-house in Great Britain is intitled and subjected*.”

Anno 28th GEORGE III. 1788.

“ AN ACT to enable justices of the peace to licence theatrical representations occasionally, under the restrictions therein contained.

“ THAT it shall and may be lawful to and for the justices of the peace of any county, to grant a licence for the performance of such tragedies, comedies, interludes, operas, plays, or farces, as now are, or hereafter shall be acted, performed, or represented, at either of the patent or licenced theatres in the city of *Westminster*, or as shall, in the manner prescribed by law, have been submitted to the inspection of the Lord Chamberlain, so as such place be not within twenty miles of the cities of *London*, *Westminster*, or *Edinburgh*.”

* The original patent was granted September 2. 1767, and renewed October 12. 1788.

S E C T. XVI.

The Gentle Shepherd—Observations upon it—Its estimation as a pastoral—As a stage performance—Its introduction upon the Canongate Theatre—Case of Drummond the printer—Effects thereof upon the finances of the Theatre at the time—Upon stage prejudices in general.

IN a recital of the dramatic occurrences of the city of Edinburgh, there are two circumstances that cannot be passed silently or superficially over : These are, the introduction of the *Gentle Shepherd*, and the performance of the tragedy of *Douglas*, already mentioned in our account of the Canongate Theatre.

THE merits of those pieces are so well known and established, as to render any comment upon them almost unnecessary. The first, confessedly in the highest stile of pastoral, should rather be classed among the poetic, than the dramatic works of the present century. But the mode in which it found its

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way

way to the stage, the estimation it acquired, its future consequences, and the local popularity it still continues to retain, must ever claim for itself and its author, a distinguished station in the Scottish Stage list.

It was first ushered into the world as a bucolick, under the title of *PATIE and ROGER*. The author*, as is well known, composed this pastoral in the neighbourhood of the Pentland Hills, amidst that native simplicity he so truly represents. Some old people, I am informed, are yet living in those sequestered solitudes, who remember hearing him recite his own verses, from whom they learnt many of his songs by rote, and so transferred them to their children, the shepherds, which they joyously chant, at this day, among the rustic scenery the poet's pen so delightfully pictured.

AFTER

* Allan Ramsay, the author of the *Gentle Shepherd*, and some other beautiful Scots poems, was a bookseller in the front of the Luckenbooths. He had a dramatic turn, and, I find, had some connection with, or interest in, the property and fixtures of the room in Carrubber's Close, while it was occupied as a Theatre. He was father to Ramsay the celebrated painter.

AFTER the troubles of forty-five, before the heat of party had subsided, a printer, called Robert Drummond, having published a satyrical poem against the Duke of Cumberland and other respectable characters of the Whig interest, was prosecuted before the magistrates for the same, who sentenced him to the pillory, and a year's banishment from the city of Edinburgh*. The result

Q q 2 of

* " November 1747. A defamatory poem having appeared about the middle of November, several of the copies were seized, and Robert Drummond printer was taken up, accused of being the publisher. The bailies, before whom the matter was brought, found, that the poem contained many scandalous, seditious, calumnious, and malicious expressions, tending most unjustly to defame George Drummond, Esq; *present* Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Walter Grosset, inspector-general of the customs, Principal Wishart, Messrs Logan, Glen, and Webster, ministers of Edinburgh, and others of still higher and more respectable characters, and that it was published and printed by the said Robert Drummond. Therefore, they ordained him to be carried to prison, and thence, on the 25th of November, betwixt the hours of twelve and one, to the cross of Edinburgh, there, to stand bare headed, with a label on his breast, inscribed thus, *for printing and publishing, a false, scandalous, and defamatory libel*, till all the copies seized of the poem, should be burnt by the hangman; then to lie in prison, till he should give bond to remove out of the city and liberties, and not return for a year, on pain of L. 100 sterling,

and

of this judicial decree, was the shutting up the printing-office of the unfortunate citizen, and leaving idle his apprentices and journey-men.

AMONG these arrangers of types, thus thrown out of employment, were some, who, by their familiarity with letters, had necessarily acquired the art of reading. They naturally, therefore, applied to the story books, Jack the Giant-Killer, and others, they found lying about, for their amusement. An edition of the *Gentle Shepherd* had been printed by their master a short time previous to his confinement; one of the copies of that work fell into their hands. They studied some of its detached scenes, and at length, associating with others of their own class in life, they formed themselves into a company, got perfect

and suffering imprisonment till the remainder of the year was run; and to be deprived of the privileges of a freeman for a year. An application was made to the Court of Justiciary for an alteration of this sentence, but without effect. He was accordingly brought to the cross on the 25th, and the copies burnt before him; and then he was carried back to prison "

SCOTS MAG. 1747 p. 553.

fect in the whole opera*; and, having obtained the manager's leave to perform it upon the Theatre then in the Canongate, for the benefit of their master, they acquitted themselves so well, as to procure permission to repeat it.

THE punishment of the printer being upon party principles, and, at that period, rather an unpopular measure, the object of the charity had a strong and favourable claim to the attention of the populace. On the first night's performance of the opera, the house was crowded in every part; and it was repeated several successive nights to such numerous audiences, that tiers of benches of

* *Dramatis Personæ* of the Gentle Shepherd, when performed by the Printers.

<i>Sir William Worthy,</i>	— —	* John Hamilton;
<i>Patie,</i>	(A Goldsmith,)	John Christie;
<i>Roger,</i>	(An Exciseman,)	John Chapman;
<i>Glaud,</i>	— —	* Robert Fleming;
<i>Symon,</i>	— —	* John Livingston;
<i>Bauldy,</i>	— —	* George Rankin.
<i>Peggy,</i>	(A Goldsmith,)	William Forrest;
<i>Madge,</i>	}	* Alexander Stewart;
<i>Eliza,</i>		
<i>Mause,</i>		— — —
<i>Jenny,</i>		— — —

Those marked thus * were Drummond's printers.

were erected upon the stage for the accommodation of the spectators†.

A PASSAGE in a prologue, 1749, "from J. Harris, by Mr Philips riding on an ass," I presume, alluded to this.

"In the gallery, side boxes, *on the stage*, in the pit,
 "What's your critic, your beau, your keeper, your wit."
 SCOTS MAG.

By this unexpected adventitious aid, the distresses of the printer were in some measure relieved, and the finances of the manager for the season augmented. But a more durable, and general advantage, was the consequence of these representations of the *Gentle Shepherd*, to the Scottish Stage.

THE multitude, being thus *dragged*, as it were, by the joint principles of charity and party zeal, to the interdicted regions of pleasure, they were induced to taste the *forbidden fruit*, and, pleased with the relish, they fed

† Mr Arnot calls them, "occasional galleries over the stage*," but they were ranges of seats on each side, from the stage door to the first wing; so that the performers could make their entrances and exits, and the scenery work in the centre.

* History of Edinburgh, p. 368.

fed plenteously. Finding themselves not *poi-soned* by the sweets, they returned to the feast with an increased appetite, and brought with them fresh guests to partake of the enticing fare.

THE first stroke at the rooted prejudices, that had so long prevailed against the stage representations in Scotland, was thus given by the production of a native bard, and the intervention of accident.

MR CALLENDER revived the *Gentle Shepherd*, I believe, in 1754, in a very respectable style. Recourse was however obliged to be had to auxiliaries, to supply some of the characters,

* *Gentle Shepherd*, as performed by Mr Callender's company,

<i>Sir William Worthy,</i>		Mr Holland ;
<i>Patie,</i>	— —	Mr Digges ;
<i>Roger,</i>	— —	* Mr Thomson ;
<i>Symon,</i>	— —	* Mr Niven ;
<i>Glaud,</i>	— —	Mr Evans ;
<i>Bauldy,</i>	— —	Mr Lancashire.
<i>Peggy,</i>	— —	* Miss Currie ;
<i>Jenny,</i>	— —	Mrs Ward ;
<i>Mause,</i>	— —	Mrs Hamilton ;
<i>Eliza,</i>	— —	* Mrs Miller ;
<i>Madge,</i>	— —	* Mrs Miller.

Those marked * were not belonging to the company.

ractions. Scarce a season has since passed without a repetition of the opera : but the assistance of the towns-people has constantly been called in for some character or other, as it is almost an impossibility for a company of comedians, selected from England, to fill up the parts with propriety, particularly before a Scotch audience.

I FIND an octavo publication of this piece in 1725. The author favoured the world with a quarto edition of it in 1728. And it was beautifully reprinted, in large quarto, by Foulis of Glasgow, 1788, with a variety of characteristic prints, local views, and a bust of the author, by Mr Allan.

THIS piece was lately modernised, and decorated with an English garb* ; but, deprived of its native phraseology, its peculiarity of idiom, and its melodious simplicity, it sunk beneath the superiority of the original work. For whenever the *Gentle Shepherd* is meant to charm, either in the closet, or on the stage, it must be in the words and airs of ALLAN RAMSAY.

* By Richard Tickle, Esq; It was ably executed, strongly cast, and excellently performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

SECT. XVII.

Observations upon the tragedy of Douglas—The Reverend John Home prosecuted as the author of the play—And other ministers for being present at its representation—The tragedy vindicated from the imputations and criticisms of the presbytery.

ALTHOUGH the first impression had been made against the strong holds of theatrical prejudice, by the successful exhibitions of the *Gentle Shepherd*; the *coup de main*, to the before impregnable fortrefs of superstition and prevalent ideas, so disadvantageous to stage representations in general, was left for the pen of the Reverend John Home, the author of *Douglas*, first performed, as we mentioned in its place, upon the Canongate stage in 1756*.

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* See page 31.

THE presbytery of Scotland, as formerly observed, had joined in, or rather, led the cry against all dramatic representations, notwithstanding their having confessedly originated, in modern Europe, from their own body*.

FOR a member of holy orders to be seen within the walls of a play-house, was anathematized by their assemblies as a crime of the deepest die. What then must have been their indignation and astonishment to be informed, that, in open violation of their most positive injunctions, a clergyman of the church of Scotland had not only presumed to write a dramatic composition, but had procured it to be represented upon the unlicensed Theatre of their metropolis!

THEY proceeded immediately to the strongest and most violent measures. They summoned before the assembly, such members of their community as had dared to be seen within the doors of the excommunicated fabric; publicly censured them, and suspended one, *pro tempore*, from his pastoral office,

* See page 4.

fice *; they also ordered circular letters to other presbyteries, enjoining rigorous measures against all such clergymen, under their jurisdictions, as had presumed to be present at such a profane representation†.

THE play itself, they most violently decried, as a blasphemous production of immoral tendency, and furnishing, by its catastrophe, an encouragement to suicide.

THE author, the Reverend John Home, minister at Athelstonford, was cited to appear before his own presbytery, at Haddington, on the 5th of April. He excused himself till the 1st of May, when he assured them he would attend. They allowed him the indulgence, with certification, that the presbytery would proceed to judgment at the time appointed, without further delay, which they ordered to be intimated to Mr Home by letter.

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* Mr White minister of Liberton, was suspended from his pastoral office, from January 12th to February 2d, the sentence having been intimated from the pulpit, by Mr Warden, moderator of the presbytery.

SCOTTS MAG. VOL. xix. p. 47.

† See appendix, No. XVI.

ON the meeting of the presbytery at Haddington, on the appointed day, Mr Home requested a further indulgence of a week. They referred the whole matter to the synod at Edinburgh, which was to meet on the 10th, and adjourned themselves till the same day at Edinburgh, that Mr Home might have an opportunity of attending, if he thought proper. The presbytery accordingly met, and Mr Home attended; but no minute was entered upon the business.

THE affair came before the synod at Edinburgh on the 12th, and was remitted to the presbytery at Haddington for want of form. At this meeting Mr Home did not, for what reasons we do not pretend to assign, think it adviseable to appear. He preached his farewell sermon at Athelstonford, to his congregation there, on Sunday, June the 5th, when many of them were bathed in tears, and on Tuesday the 7th, gave in his demission to the presbytery of Haddington.

BUT, although the author of the performance in question deigned not to appear finally to the summons of the presbytery, up-

ON

on his own account, he was not neglectful in defence of his friend. He attended in his place, as a member of the assembly, and supported the cause of his brother minister with great firmness. He declared, that if there was any fault, it lay not at the door of the defendant, but at his own, with whom the crime had originated: and concluded his observations in the words of the unfortunate Nifus.

“ Adsum qui feci; in me convertite ferrum,

“ Tantum infelicem nimium delexit amicum.

VIR. ÆN. L. ix. v. 427.

“ Me, me, he cried, turn all your rage alone

“ On me; the fact confess'd, the fault my own;

“ His only crime (if friendship could offend)

“ Is too much love for his unhappy friend.”

DRYDEN.

THESE lines, so applicable to the situation of the speaker, thus pleading in defence of a suffering associate in his own cause, made a sensible impression upon some of the judges, and, in all probability, mitigated the sentence against Mr Carlyle*, the only one, except the author,

* “The synod does by this sentence declare their high displeasure with Mr Carlyle, for the step he has taken in going

author, they seem most strenuously to have pursued ; whose punishment, had it not been for Mr Hume's interference, might possibly have proved more severe than a reprimand from the presbytery, and a confession of contrition and penitence from himself.

BEFORE the conclusion of the year (1757), Mr Sheridan, then manager of the Dublin Theatre, and father to the present Mr Sheridan, sent over to Mr Home, in London, a gold medal, of ten guineas value, with an inscription, acknowledging his singular merit in having enriched the English Stage with the tragedy of *Douglas*.

THE presbytery of Glasgow coincided with that of Edinburgh, lamenting the melancholy
fact

to the Theatre ; and strictly injoin him to abstain therefrom in time coming."

Mr Carlyle said, " he received the admonition and injunction of the synod with respect. He was sorry for the offence he had given ; and hoped he should never give the synod, or any other judicature of the church, occasion to call him before them again for such a piece of conduct."

SCOTS MAG. VOL. XIX. p. 218.

fact that there should have been a tragedy written by a minister of the church of Scotland; and repeating the erroneous assertion in the *exhortation* of the presbytery of Edinburgh, that stage representations had been condemned by the church in all ages*; recommending it to the General Assembly to enquire, whether a tragedy, called *Douglas*, written by a minister of the church of Scotland, had been “procured to be enacted” on the Canon-gate Theatre; whether or not, certain ministers of the gospel had been present at such representation; and praying them to give such directions, as in their wisdoms may be deemed necessary, “that such ministers, and all others, may be sensible, that the church of Scotland will never protect her members in a practice so unbecoming their character, and

* This assertion must have proceeded from misinformation. It has already been shewn, that plays in modern Europe originated from the church, (page 4.) and several theatrical pieces had been composed by the members of it. Add to these; Buchanan wrote *Jephthé, five vatum, tragedia*, and *Baptistes, five calumnia, tragedia*; besides translating the *Medea* and *Alceſtis* of Euripides, Milton wrote *Samson Agonistes*, and *Comus*, a mask; and the General Assembly of the church of Scotland expressly admitted of theatri-

and of such pernicious tendency to the great interests of *religion, industry, and virtue* *.

By this overstrained exertion of authority, the pastors being expelled from forbidden ground, their flocks, excited by the impulse of curiosity, were induced to overlook, and at length, overleap the pale, where they broufed through interdicted lawns, upon before untasted shoots, indulging in a novelty that infused a mingled gratification of rationality, information, and pleasure.

AN author, on the same subject, writes,
 “ The public attention leading people to consult

cal exhibitions, provided the subject was not scriptural. *Book of Universal Kirk*, p. 145, 161.

The tragedy of *Douglas* could not be classed under this description. St Paul, after his conversion, and consequently while a professor of Christianity, quotes a passage from a Grecian poet ; “ For in him we live, and move, and have our being ;” *as certain also of your own poets have said*, “ For we are also his offspring,” Acts xvi. 28. which shews his respect for poetry, and the opinion in which he held it. Nay, he inserted in the sacred text, such were his ideas of stage compositions, a verse from a play (the *Thais* of Menander) which still exists, “ Be not deceived : evil communications corrupt good manners,” 1 Cor. xv. 33.

* See appendix, No. XVII.

sult their own reason, in a good manner dissipated the prejudices which had hitherto subsisted against the stage." Thus, a striking lesson was afforded, "that extravagant and unsuccessful attempts to enslave the minds of men, must be productive of increasing liberality of sentiment*."

THE same newspaper, the Edinburgh Courant, which contained the fulminations of the presbytery against the performance of *Douglas*, advertised the repeated representation of the play, *with material alterations by the author*. It still kept its ground, has continued to be acted in every Theatre in the three kingdoms; and Mr Home, the author, is looked up to with the highest respect.

To enter into a particular description of the merits or defects of this piece, would be stepping out of our way. But as it wears so strong a feature in the work in which we are embarked, we cannot avoid at least noticing the official and marked objections to it, as thrown out by its opposers at the time.

IN the course of the proceedings against

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* Arnot's History of Edinburgh, p. 378.

the author, and other ministers *, who attended the representation, it appeared in proof, by depositions laid before the presbytery, that a player, in the character of the *Shepherd*, swore *by him that died on the accursed tree* †; that another, in that of *Glenalvon*, said,

“ No priest ! No priest ! I'll risk eternal fire ! ”

and that a third, in that of *Lady Barnard*, or *Lady Randolph* ‡, kneeled down, and put up some prayers.

WHETHER the above passages were, or were not, improperly introduced by Mr Home, is, and indeed, was at the time needless to discuss, as they were suppressed by the author, no doubt, with the assent of his brethren, after the first night's performance, and never appeared in print.

THE

* Messrs Carlyle of Inveresk, Home at Polwarth, Scot at Westruther, Dyfart at Eccles, Cupples at Swinton, Steel at Stair, and White of Liberton.

† “ By him that died on the accursed tree,” was an expression taken nearly *verbatim* from an old English ballad, called “ Adam Bell Clym of the Clough.”

See Reliques of Ancient Poetry.

‡ The name of *Lady Barnard*, heroine of the play, was changed to *Lady Randolph*, on its first representation in London.

THE kneeling of *Lady Barnard*, since *Lady Randolph*, is an action, *ad libitem*, of the actresses, and may be adopted or omitted, according to her judgment or feeling, on the occasion. It is a part, however, of the mechanism of stage business, which has constantly been practised in a variety of scenes of agitation, rage, or distress, by our first actors, and was no doubt, so originally arranged by the monarch of the British drama. The queen of Henry the Sixth, when compelled to give up her children, that were afterwards murdered by the Usurper, cries,

" ——— To heav'n I leave 'em !

" Hear me, ye guardian powers of innocence !

" Awake or sleeping, oh, protect 'em still*."

THE Duchess of York, throwing herself upon her knees, also before *Richard*, exclaims,

" Then hear me, heav'n ! and heav'n, at his last hour,

" Be deaf to him, as he is now to me*."

AND on the repeating the following lines, containing one of the grand articles of the church's censure, by the *Lady Randolphs* I have seen,

S. f, 2

" O ! thou

* Richard III. Act 4.

" O ! thou all righteous and eternal king !"
 " Who father of the fatherless art call'd,
 " Protect my son—Thy inspiration, Lord !
 " Hath fill'd his bosom with that sacred fire,
 " Which in the breasts of his forefathers burn'd :
 " Set him on high like them, that he may shine
 " The star and glory of his native land :
 " Then let the minister of death descend,
 " And bear my willing spirit to its place"—

The stillness of the house, the solemnness of the appeal, the supplicating attitude of the imploring matron, with declining head, extended arms, and uplifted eyes, could not fail to infuse into the breasts of the surrounding auditors, the mixed effusions of benignity, and devotional sensations, the natural impulse of so sublime a scene.

It was objected by its reverend opposers, that its plot had an immoral tendency, and that its catastrophe promoted the crime of suicide. In my humble opinion, in both these points of view, it furnishes principles the very reverse. The only fault we find imputable to *Lady Randolph*, was the "taking an oath equivocal." She swore not to commit what she had already *committed*. She

was

was married to *Douglas*, when her father
"questioned her," *Lady Randolph* confesses,

" ————— Alone, forsaken, faint,
" Kneeling beneath his sword, fault'ring I took
" An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
" Wed one of *Douglas*' name. Sincerity,
" Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
" Thy onward path ! although the earth should gape,
" And from the gulph of hell destruction cry,
" To take dissimulation's winding way."

FROM a conscious remorse of her duplicity of conduct to a parent, she naturally breaks out into this short inference,

" ————— This moral learn,
" This precious moral, from my tragic tale."

IN consequence of her first fatal secret, her husband having fallen in battle, she was compelled to follow it up with another, that of the birth of her son ; who, though miraculously saved from the flood, was suffered, from that *fatal secret* of being unknown, to fall by the machinations of a villain.

WHEREAS, had her conduct been fair, filial, and open, her son might have been acknowledged ;

ledged ; he might have lived and flourished at the head of his illustrious line, the protecting guardian of his kindred and his name.

THAT the tragedy held out in its conclusion, a pernicious tendency to self-slaughter, we look upon, from the foregoing reasons, to be equally ill founded. The act of suicide, even upon heathen principles, cannot be justified. The voluntary resignation of life by Cato, though a patriot and a Roman, has its opposers as well as its defenders, and continues to this day, an undecided subject in the scholastic themes. But in a Christian, the abetting its principles must be adjudged a crime of the blackest die. On this subject, I have before decidedly expressed myself. *Eldred*, in the tragedy of that name, in endeavouring to dissuade his daughter-in-law from her resolves upon self-destruction, decries the deed as,

“ ————— A foul attack

“ On heav’ns prerogative ; a theft against

“ The Most Supreme, which sorely would intral thee—

“ Life for a life is human forfeiture ;

“ But he who robs the gods of his own being,

“ Though he evade his miseries on earth,

“ To keener pains must be consign’d hereafter.”—

ELDRED, Act IV. p. 3.

THE

THE guilt of suicide being admitted, let us see how far the author of *Douglas* falls under the censure as an abettor of the crime.

Lady Randolph, as before observed, by her deception and disobedience to a parent, had been reduced to the deplorable situation in which she leaves us in the last scene of the play ; we are afterwards informed,

“ She ran, she flew like lightning up the hill,
“ Nor halted till the precipice she gain’d,
“ Beneath whose low’ring top the river falls,
“ Ingulph’d in rifted rocks : thither she came,
“ As fearless as the eagle lights upon it :
“ *Ob ! bad you seen her last despairing look !*
“ Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes
“ Down on the deep : then lifting up her head
“ And her white hands to heav’n, seeming to say,
“ Why am I forc’d to this ? she plunged herself
“ Into the empty air.” —

THUS perished, in a fit of desperation, a wretched mortal, reduced, by her own misconduct, to the utmost pitch of human misery.

Is the circumstance out of nature or uncommon ? We hear of such melancholy truths daily.

daily. Is the author culpable for inserting so natural a circumstance? As well may we accuse the holy writ of encouraging suicide, by recording the death of Saul*.

I HAVE in a former publication observed, that, "perhaps the reason why so many tragedies are concluded unhappily, is the difficulty of saving the principal character with propriety. The bowl and dagger, as Dryden observes, are always ready to relieve an author, when he is at a loss to complete his catastrophe.

"MANY subjects, historic facts especially, will not admit of a fortunate conclusion. But I still contend, that where a writer has it in his power, and can bring it about with propriety, it must give a greater degree of satisfaction,

* "Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was fore afraid: therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it.

"And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him." 1 Samuel xxxi. 4, 5.

satisfaction, to see an oppressed or distressed hero rewarded for his virtues, than to behold innocence fall a victim to the machinations of villainy*.”

It would not perhaps have been an easy matter for the critic to point out the mode of contriving a happy termination to the tragedy of *Douglas*, without a much greater violation of the rules of poetical justice, than had been objected to by the learned divines. Had *Douglas*, with his youthful agility and fire, been permitted to have escaped the assassin's stab, and the play had finished with the exaltation of *Douglas*, and the happiness of *Lady Randolph*, it must have proved a bad lesson to female youth, by discouraging the practice of “*sincerity, the first of virtues*,” in their transactions with a parent.

It would likewise have deprived the audience of those sympathising sensations of sorrow attendant upon scenes of distress, and the author, of presenting the world with one of the best short epilogues we ever remember to have heard ; in which he observes,

T t

“ — That

* Preface to *Eldred*.

“ ————— That pity is the best;
“ The noblest passion in the human breast ;
“ For when its sacred streams the heart o’erflow,
“ In gushes pleasure with the tide of wo ;
“ And when the waves retire, like those of Nile,
“ They leave behind them such a golden foil,
“ That there the virtues without culture grow,
“ Here the sweet blossoms of affection blow.”

THE play, it must be observed, with all its imperfections on its head, and the opposition formed against it, which did not perhaps operate much in its disfavour, was received by all ranks of people with the strongest marks of applause, and repeatedly performed several succeeding nights ; its *run*, to make use of a stage phrase, being unprecedented in that era ; and while a relish for theatrical entertainments shall pervade the taste of a British audience, the tragedy of *Douglas* shall remain a standing dish at the dramatic feast.

S E C T. XVIII.

Effects of the tragedy of Douglas upon the author's pursuits—Its original cast in Covent Garden—Mrs Woffington—As an actress—Her figure—Anecdote of Mr Holland in Hamlet—Mr and Mrs Yates—The author's introduction to Mr Garrick.

MY theatrical pursuits, at an early period of life, imbued an energy, if not their origin, from a representation of the tragedy of *Douglas*; and my future career, through the various stage gradations, was connected with, and greatly affected by it.

THIS play was among the earliest of those dramatic exhibitions I beheld on my arrival in London. It was on the first night of its performance. I was most forcibly struck with Mr Barry in the *Young Hero*. I must indeed have been devoid of every spark of sensation, if I had sat an unaffected spectator. Whoever had an opportunity of beholding that celebrated actor in the zenith of his the-

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atrical

atrical powers, cannot possibly have forgot the wonderful effects of his fascinating faculties. My ideas were not, however, confined to the sensations of pleasure I enjoyed from beholding the performance, I envied the applause of the actor. Having performed *George Barnwell* while at school, with some degree of approbation, I deemed myself not unequal to the task; and to have been permitted to enact *Young Norval*, with the mother I beheld, would, at that instant, have been the fullest gratification of my wish.

THE play was superbly and fancifully dressed, but without the least badge of national distinction. Mrs Woffington was the *Lady Randolph**; who looked and moved the character she represented most divinely: a peculiar tone, with some degree of harshness in the voice, was her only drawback from perfection. It yet remained for the vast excellence

* Cast of the tragedy of *Douglas*, when first brought out at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, March 14. 1757.

<i>Douglas,</i>	—	—	Barry;
<i>Glenalvon,</i>	—	—	Smith;
<i>Lord Randolph,</i>	—	—	Ridout;
<i>Old Norval,</i>	—	—	Sparks;
<i>Lady Randolph,</i>	—	—	Woffington:

I insert this from memory, but I think it is correct.

cellence of Mrs Barry, who afterwards performed the part upon the same stage, to come up to the ideas of the audience in that unrivalled character; to represent, in apparent reality, the figure, voice, and feelings of the supposed *Lady Randolph*, and to place the tragedy of *Douglas* in the first station of dramatic compositions.

MRS WOFFINGTON was at one period the favourite of Mr Garrick*, in whose praise he composed the song of LOVELY PEGGY, which in my remembrance was generally sung, and exceedingly popular; beginning with this stanza,

“ Once more I’ll tune the vocal shell,
 “ O’er hills and dales my passion tell;
 “ A flame which time can never quell,
 “ That burns for thee, my Peggy.”

WITH a tall, and completely formed figure, nature had bestowed upon her a most beautiful

* Mrs Margaret Woffington was a native of Dublin, born in 1718. Mr Garrick’s acquaintance commenced with her on his first visit to that city in 1742, when she performed *Cordelia* and *Ophelia*, to his *Lear* and *Hamlet*. She appeared in London for the first time, A. D. 1738, in the character of *Sir Harry Wildair*.

ful face; to which grace and highly finished accomplishments had been added, by her attention to, and a familiarity with high life. Her line of acting was *Lady Townly*, *Lady Betty Modish*, *Clarinda*, &c. &c. in which she was the Mrs Abington of the age.

I SPEAK this from report only, as besides *Lady Randolph* repeatedly, I only saw her in *Sir Harry Wildair* and *Lothario*, as she was taken suddenly ill before the close of the season*, in reciting the epilogue to *As You Like It*, being obliged to leave it unfinished, and never afterwards appeared upon the stage. She survived the shock some time, and expired of a gradual decay, in the prime of life, having scarcely attained her forty-fourth year.

SHE was, when very young, a pupil of Madame Violante's, the French posture-mistress, already mentioned as managerefs in Carrubers Close. From her she was instructed in the rudiments of easy action and graceful deportment, which, when an adult, she

* May 17. 1757.

she unremittingly endeavoured to improve, having made a visit to Paris for that purpose. There she was introduced to Mademoiselle Dumefnil, an actress celebrated for her elocution and elegance of action.

MRS WOFFINGTON had the advantage of an early initiation upon the Theatre* ; and afterwards availed herself of Colley Cibber's instruction ; in which, however, she imbibed somewhat of the maxim of the *old school*, where nature, and feeling were frequently sacrificed to a pompous monotony.

HER figure in mens cloaths was without compare. She continued the unrivalled *flock* *Sir Harry Wildair* for some years ; which she never performed without great popular attraction. It was the opinion of the critics of the day, that when she died, the play must
die

* When the *Beggars Opera* was first acted at Dublin, it was so much applauded and admired, that all ranks of people flocked to see it. A company of children, under the title of *Lilliputians*, were encouraged to represent this favourite piece at the Theatre Royal ; and Miss Woffington, then in the tenth year of her age, made a very distinguished figure among these pigmy comedians.

die with her ; as supposing no one could be found equal to the part of *Sir Harry Wildair*, and even Garrick failed in the competition with her.

So much was this eminent actress at home in her male attire, that entering the green-room, after having received repeated bursts of applause from the audience, in one of the scenes of *Sir Harry*, and being elated with the particular success of her efforts that evening, she exultingly exclaimed, " I believe *one half* of the audience take me for a man." Mrs Clive, who was a great satyrist ; who, on the side of severity, I have often witnessed, seldom lost a hit ; and who was Mrs Woffington's professed antagonist, gave her this, at that time, well known retort, " Oh, never be uneasy at that, Madam, for the *other half* know to the contrary."

It was a custom, at the time I am now treating of, at particular benefits, to erect an amphitheatre across the stage, from one front wing to the other, with rows of benches, more or less in number, as occasion required, which not only destroyed the effect, but
greatly

greatly incommoded the business of the performance. In some instances, I have seen the seats of these temporary edifices rise one above another, higher than the trees, and hats and bonnets were beheld fastened to the clouds. A single entrance was left upon each side next the stage door, which was often choaked up with by-standers, and the feats of Bosworth-field, amidst drums, trumpets, battle-axes, and spears, were enacted between two audiences, where *Richard* spoke his tent soliloquy, and his dying lines, upon a carpet no bigger than a table-cloth.

THESE inconveniences never failed to give disgust to those who came with an intention to be amused, and could yield pleasure to none but the actor, for whose benefit they were tolerated, and those particular friends who assembled solely to serve him. Bickerings frequently arose at the commencement of the play, between the audiences before and behind the curtain; thence, upon other less attractive performances, arose the practice of inserting at the bottom of the advertisements and play-bills—N. B. *There will be no building on the stage.*

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ON one of these evenings, when admittance was allowed at the stage door, and Mrs Woffington was advertised for *Lothario*, curious to gain *a peep behind the curtain*, and to be favoured with a nearer view of the Actresses, who had so forcibly attracted my attention in *Lady Randolph*, I obtained, what I then deemed a most enviable situation, the liberty of ranging at large behind the scenes, of conversing with some of the performers, to whom I had previously found the means of procuring an introduction, and of *making my bow* to Mrs Woffington, who, I was convinced, and I have not found occasion to change my opinion, in the *tout ensemble* as a male representer, had not then, nor has not yet been equalled.

IN speaking of temporary stage buildings, I am forcibly impelled to mention a circumstance which I was an eye-witness of, and which I have heard very erroneously related. Mr Holland fixed upon the tragedy of *Hamlet* for his first benefit. I was acquainted with him previous to his *entre* upon the stage. He was clerk to a merchant in Barbican, and born at Cheshwick, in the neighbourhood

neighbourhood of London, where his father then resided. When the night came, his friends attended, and his native village was left almost literally empty. Among the rest of his visiting acquaintance, was a country girl, seated at the west end of the amphitheatre, where she had an easy egress.

ON the appearance of the *Ghost*, by the usual stage trick, *Young Hamlet's* hat flew off, and lay nearly at the damsel's feet. She pitying the situation of her young friend, gently steals from her seat, takes up the hat, and places it upon Mr Holland's head, with the broad corner foremost, as is generally worn by a drunken man. She regains her seat with apparent exultation for the friendly feat she had performed, in defending the young prince from such a "nipping and an eager air," as he had just been shivering under; and *Hamlet* proceeded to finish the scene, unconscious of the ridiculous figure in which he was placed. The audience, unwilling to break in upon the solemnity of the performance, bit their lips, and with difficulty restrained their risibility, till the *Ghost* and *Hamlet* were fairly off the stage, when they

U u 2 indulged

indulged themselves in one of the loudest laughs I ever heard in a Theatre.

ON Mr Garrick's arrival from Italy, among other improvements, such as adopting foot lights, instead of circular chandeliers over head, &c. &c. he removed the above grievance, by augmenting the front of the house, so as to hold numbers equivalent to those formerly admitted upon the stage building; by which means the performers could suffer no pecuniary diminution on their nights, and consequently, had no cause to complain of an infringement, either of privilege or property.

BUT, to return to the *Lady Randolph* of Mrs Woffington—I was so captivated with the scenes between the mother and the son, that the passion for the stage, with which I had before been possessed, was thereby the more heightened; and I resolved, with a stronger propensity for the profession, that the part of *Young Norval* should be my opening character.

WITH

WITH this determination, at my leisure hours, I prepared myself in the words of the part, and took other measures to attain my purpose. I made an acquaintance with Mr Yates of Drury-Lane Theatre. He took for his second wife Mrs Graham, who had then only shewn some faint glimmerings of that dramatic excellence which afterwards so conspicuously shone forth ; and which is so well remembered by the theatrical frequenters of this city*.

MRS YATES was at that time retained by the managers of Drury-Lane, as a substitute for Mrs Cibber, and was in waiting for her decline. I obtained permission to rehearse the scenes of *Douglas*, with her *Lady Randolph*, in her own house, where she assured me she was so well pleased with what she had

* Mr and Mrs Yates were in Edinburgh in Mr Digges' time, and again under my management, in 1785, when she appeared during the season in the following characters, some of which were more than once repeated :—*Duchess of Braganza*, *Lady Macbeth*, *Jane Shore*, *Portia*, in the Merchant of Venice, *Lady Townly*, *Medea*, *Zulima*, in the Prince of Tunis, and *Lady Randolph*.

had heard, that, if I wished it, she would recommend me to Mr Garrick. This procured me an introduction to the English *Roscins*.

I WAS ushered into the presence of the Little-Great theatrical potentate, by his brother, George Garrick ; and after a few questions and replies on the subject, I recited to him the introductory narrative of *Young Norval*, with some of the spirited passages in the fourth and fifth acts.

“ If I Were chain’d unarm’d, and bedrid old—”

“ The blood of *Douglas* will protect itself.”

I HAD approached the theatrical monarch with fear and trembling. His eye, more quick and penetrating than any I had ever encountered, was rivetted on mine ; and whatever trifling powers nature might have bestowed upon me, they were evidently lowered by apprehension ; and I must have exhibited a confused and feeble effort.

WHATEVER

WHATEVER Mr Garrick's thoughts were at the time, he professed to entertain no small degree of hope. He had not the least doubt, but with a little practice and experience, I might succeed; to what degree, till he saw me *upon the planks*, he could not pretend to say; but recommended it strongly to me not to lose sight of the profession; made some general observations upon acting, and advised me by all means to find out some country company, in order to habituate myself to the stage; a mode, he declared, he had himself adopted*, and which he should invariably hold out to every novice.

MR GARRICK's advice I did not implicitly follow; for, although I felt its propriety, and was sensible, in my situation, of its salutary effects; yet could I by no means relish the humiliating situation in which for a time I must

* Mr Garrick's first attempt upon the stage, was at Ipswich, under the feigned name of Lyddal, where he made his appearance in the character of *Aboan* during the summer 1741, and on the 19th of October the same year, performed *Richard the Third* at Goodmans Fields play-house.

must thereby have been placed; for notwithstanding a favourite author had informed me, that

"Thespis, inventor of the tragic art,

"Carried his vagrant players in a cart*—

It was not, at the time I am speaking of, thought reputable, even by the members of the profession themselves, for an actor of any estimation to exhibit in a country town-hall,
or

* *Disiter et plaustres vixisse poemata Thespis.*

FRAN. HOR. v. IV. p. 245.

Note 276. *Vixisse poemata.*] Thespis has the honour of inventing tragedy, because he made some remarkable improvements in it. He first relieved the chorus, when fatigued with singing, with an actor, who recited the adventures of some illustrious person; and he afterwards added a second player, and formed the dialogue. These improvements are expressed by *canerent agerentque poemata*; one marks the chorus, which he found established; the other means the actors, which he added. Aristotle tells us, that it was not known in his time by whom the mask was invented. When tragedy had arrived at some degree of perfection, the poets began to cultivate comedy, which before lay neglected. But as they indulged to the most excessive licentiousness, such as exposing the magistrates on the stage by their names, or by masks painted like them, Lamachus made the *first* reformation among them, and Alexander the Great a second. One gave birth to the middle comedy; the other to the new, in which the chorus was no longer allowed, *Turpiter obtinuit.*

or a village barn ; that practice was left for the principal performers of the present day to render fashionable. I was not over fond, however strong my inclination for the stage then was, of entering upon it in a subordinate light, or in any itinerant company.— The city of Edinburgh was pointed out to me on this occasion as the capital of a kingdom, where a regular and respectable Theatre was established : I determined, therefore, for the North. In consequence of that resolution, I some time after made a visit to Mr Love, with whom I engaged myself *upon trial* for the Edinburgh season, the result of which has been before recited.

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S E C T. XIX.

The deciding upon dramatic pieces or persons embarrassing to a manager—Consequence of refusals—Mr Garrick's general mode on those occasions—Effects of his indecisions—Applications to Mr Foote—To Mr Rich—Anecdotes of the latter—As a manager, and machinist—As a Harlequin, by the name of Lun—Celebrated by Pope—His general character.

THE deciding upon the demerits of a theatrical candidate, or a new play, are the most unpleasing, as well as the most perplexing offices in a manager's department.

IF a piece is sent in for inspection, without either probability, design, or connection, the moment a negative is given, the writer of it becomes the manager's professed foe. He is either instantly denounced a most stupid blockhead, or, being a writer himself, is accused as a jealous purloining scribbler; and

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consequently

consequently unfit to fill the situation in which he is placed.

SHOULD a candidate for theatric fame apply for an introduction upon the stage, though he should be deformed, have a defective, or indeed, no voice at all, with every imperfection you could point out, as I have often witnessed, yet his refusal will be certainly attended with a disgust towards, and an unalterable hatred to the manager for life. Thus, in either case, he unavoidably becomes the butt of pamphleteers, and newspaper squibs, or food for revilers in theatrical clubs. If any one, at those nightly meetings, is louder than another in his railings against the manager, the odds are ten to one, that he is some disappointed author, or a wou'd-be actor.

A BEAR will not attempt to fly, or a crow to swim, but man, vain man! will aim at pursuits the most preposterously absurd. A young man, of powerful connections, some years ago, having a strong desire for the stage, tho' nearly as deformed in person as my old school acquaintance, Master Æsop, because he had been refused by the managers of both
houses,

houses, commenced their deadly and declared enemy ; and consequently became the most determined leader of opposition to every managerial measure.

MR FOOTE having procured a licence for opening the Hay-Market Theatre, and advertisements having been inserted in the newspapers to that purport, a variety of applications were made to him for engagements. Among many others, a lady was introduced, not over young, but rather handsome, and of a genteel appearance. "*Pray, Madam,*" says Mr Foote, "*Are you for tragedy, or comedy?*" No answer. "*Are you a veteran? or is it your first attempt?*" Not a word. "*Hum! Are you married, Madam?*" "*Pray, Sir,*" says the lady, turning one of her ears to him, "*Speak a little LOUDER, FOR I AM DEAF.*" "*Why, zounds, then Madam, why did you forget your trumpet?*"

A FEW days after, a person of decent appearance requested he might have the honour of introducing a lady to him, in praise of whose abilities as an actress he was not a little lavish ; and particularly, as she was not
only

only excellent as to figure, and speaking, but remarkably so as to singing, in which department, very few of the vocal line in London could bear a comparison. Mr Foote, from the description, naturally supposing he had met with a prize, appointed an immediate interview; the agent had no sooner quitted the room, than he returns somewhat precipitately, addressing the manager with, "*Sir, —there is one thing—I beg your pardon—There is one thing, Sir, I had forgot to mention, and which you may possibly object to—THE LADY IS A BLACK.*"—"Ob! no matter," replied the humourist; "*we will introduce the Roman fashion: the lady shall wear a MASK.*"

RIDICULOUS as this circumstance may appear to the reader, I can assure him that I had it from Mr Foote himself; and I had before accidentally seen the identical lady, as I was passing through Lancashire, in the part of *Polly*. I could not help observing to my friend in the pit, when *Macbeath* addressed her with, "*Pretty Polly, say,*" that "it would have been more germane to the matter, had he changed the phrase to *SOOTY Polly, say.*" I was informed, that a few nights before, she had

had enacted *Juliet*, when doubtless her *Romeo* most feelingly recited,

“ Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night,

“ Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear.”

So little are we judges of ourselves, and so blind to our natural defects, that the most glaring infirmities are deemed by us as trifling obstacles, easy to be surmounted; and to refuse an application, however absurd, is in a manager the height of temerity. The Deaf Dowager, and the Woolly Blackmoor, would pass their hours of scandal in depicting the ignorance and ill manners of Mr Foote, in refusing to exhibit such rare talents, in the characters of *Lady Betty Modish*, and *Rossetta*.

MR GARRICK was very sore on these occasions, and often too much swayed by his fears; he was tremblingly alive to the very whisper of a lampoon or a pasquinade. To scribble with ill-nature is more easily acquired than a fluency of elocution, or the gracefulness of action; and a condemned actor may very possibly prove a most severe critic.

AN

AN author* on the same subject observes, "The man to whom Nature has denied the genius to compose a play or a farce, may have abilities to strike out a very poignant satire. He who is an utter stranger to dramatic poetry, may sting with an essay, wound with a paragraph, or bite with an epigram."

UNDER the impulse of these considerations, our modern Roscius was cautious, peculiarly complaisant, and generally, unless from some emergency reduced to come to the point, undecided in his answers. Thus, by avoiding Scylla, he frequently risked the dangers of Charybdis.

A CANDIDATE for the sock or buskin, he would dismiss with declarations to the following tendency:—"Upon my word, Sir, you have great merit—And your conception—I like that last speech very well, exceedingly well indeed, Sir—Your voice too—I really think—But for this season I can assure you I am quite full—Leave your address with my
brother

* Life of Garrick, V. I. p. 208.

brother George, and if any vacancy happens, you shall hear from him."

AN author, on the return of his *refused play*, would be informed, that, "I do assure you, Sir, I read your play with a good deal of pleasure—It is not destitute of merit—Some alteration in the arrangement of the scenes, and a few additions to the last act, to render the *denouement* a little more dramatic, which might be pointed out—And then I really think—Hey! Why now, brother George, is not that your opinion?—Hey! Do you think we might not risk it?—However, Sir, if it had all the merit in the world it would be impossible for me to make room for it at present, or even for one or two seasons to come. At some future period, when I am relieved from the engagements I have made, I might perhaps find an opening; and, as I observed, Sir, with the alterations I could point out, I know not but your piece might merit a trial. I am sorry I should be so situated at present. But prior engagements, you know, must be kept. Good morning, Sir—John, shew the gentleman out."

Y y

RELIEVED

RELIEVED from his visitants, with all those flourishes with which his nature was so plentifully furnished, he forbade his door to be opened to them again; leaving the result of his *half yea and half nay* declarations to the chapter of accidents.

IN all probability, before the specified period came round, from inclination, situation, or circumstances, the parties were differently disposed; and consequently, peaceably and speciously got rid of. But if either the one or the other happened to be possessed of perseverance and fortitude, supported by any degree of personal interest*, the complaisant expressions of the manager were construed into a promise, which, after a variety of delays and excuses, he was obliged to make good, and by that means, compromise with the claimant, at the expence of his judgement.

Not-

* "The recommendation, or rather imposition of some great persons, whom it was not prudence to disoblige, sometimes came in, with a high hand, to support their pretensions: and then *cout que cout* acted it must be! So when the short life of this wonderful nothing was over, the actors were perhaps abused in a preface for obstructing the success of it, and the town publicly damn'd us for our private civility."

Cibber's Apology, p. 344

NOTWITHSTANDING, however, Mr Garrick's vast abilities as an actor, and his merit as a writer, his opinion, with respect to the acceptance or rejection of new pieces, was not infallible.

THE *tragedy of DOUGLAS*, which I have already announced, according to my humble conception, as one of our first modern dramatic compositions, was rejected by him, as being too simple in its fable, and destitute of stage effect.

PERHAPS, as I have already experienced in one of the most momentous concerns of my life, he either never examined into its merits, or delegating the exercise of his ideas upon the subject implicitly to another, rested his decision upon an erroneous report. Be that as it may, after Mr Garrick had been informed of the success of the play at Edinburgh, and when he also understood that the author was in treaty to bring it out at Covent Garden, he offered to receive it at Drury Lane; but his proposal was rejected; and he candidly confessed, through the remainder of his life, whenever the subject was

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started

started, that no circumstance in the course of his management gave him so much concern, as the recollection of his having rejected the tragedy of DOUGLAS.

MR RICH, regardless of consequences, treated both authors and actors with a great degree of *nonchalans*. The laconic correspondence betwixt him and Mr QUIN is well known. The latter, having taken offence at some of the manager's arrangements, or thinking himself slighted, by his silence at the commencement of the season, in one of his consequential and fullen moods, wrote to Mr Rich, and had an instant reply. The two letters run *verbatim* thus :—

“ I AM at Bath.

QUIN.”

“ You may stay there and be d—d.

RICH.”

OF his treatment towards an author, I had a singular specimen. I was at cards with him, one of the Miss Rich's, and his friend Bencraft, one evening, when a gentleman
was

was announced to be in the hall, and so importunate for a fight of the manager, that he was ordered to be admitted.

MR RICH's peculiar characteristics were, the taking a great deal of snuff; stroaking a tabby cat, which constantly attended him, and generally sat upon his knee; and remembering no one's name.

Rich. Well, Mifter! What's your pleasure?

Author. Sir, (*rather pettishly*) I left a manuscript play with you, I believe three months ago. You assured me you would read it the first opportunity. I cannot help thinking the time long: I am, excuse me, Sir, a little anxious about it; and called, as I have done often, to learn its fate.

Rich. Why, look you, *Mifter*, I have no leisure just now to peruse *manuscripts*. When my pantomime is up*, I may get a look at them; there they lie—A whole regiment; opera, farce, and blank verse—You shall get your turn. I suppose, *Mifter*, about the end
of

* Mr Rich was then reviving the *Sorcerer*.

of next season I may be able to give you my opinion.

Author. As that is the case, Sir, I beg you will return me the manuscript; and I shall not again break in upon your repose, or thus unseasonably interrupt your amusement.

Rich. Oh to be sure, Mister; I have no wish to retain it. Here, Thomas. Look into the drawer next the window, and give Mr What's-his-name his play—You will know your own, Mister—How stands the game, Ben? Seven to five, and hearts trumps—There's the deuce—Come, Mister, my partner, try what you can do.

Author. Sir, my play is not here.

Rich. Is it not?—Why then, Mister, pick and chuse—Turn them over again, and take which of them you like best—A thousand to one but it may be better than yours, Mister, and answer your purpose quite as well.

THE author not having the same kindred affection for another's bantling as for his own,

own, disrelifhed the change; and although he was promifed his favourite production the next day, yet, refufing to venture the offspring of his brain, its firft born too, in fuch fufpicious company, it was at laft procured, and the author withdrew, not without evident figns of difappointment and chagrin.

A CANDIDATE for the bufkin, being defired to repeat the celebrated foliloquy in *Hamlet*, began, *to-be*, or not *to-be*. Rich very gravely replied, “Toby may be a very good dog, Mifter, but Toby will not do for me. You need not therefore trouble yourfelf any farther, Mifter.”

A CIRCUMSTANCE, not very diflimilar to this, happened lately to myfelf. A ftudent from the Weft of Scotland wifhed to perform on this ftage the part of *Douglas*; I defired him to repeat any paffage of it he pleafed. Without hesitation he began,

“My name is *Norval* on the *Grampian* HILLS.”

I requested to know what his name was elfewhere? He was filent as to the queftion, but replied, “Though I am not fo well verfed in
ftage

stage business, no one understands the author better, as I have studied him thoroughly.

A NOVITIATE, offering himself as a candidate for the buskin, when I happened to be present, requested to go through the scene of *Othello* before the Senate. On being questioned by the manager, whether or not he could sing, he answered in the negative. "I am glad of it," replied Mr Rich; "It is a good sign. I cannot sing, and yet you are sensible, Mister," addressing himself to me, "that no one understands an emphasis better, or is more familiar with the propriety of expression, the tones, dignity, and rounding of a sentence. I would not give a farthing, Mister, for a man that shall attempt tragedy, that can sing."

"Most potent, grave, and reverend Seigniors,

"My very noble, and approv'd good masters"—

"There never was one able to turn a tune that could speak, except my friend Walker* :

but

* Mr Walker stood unrivalled in *Bajazet* and *Hesperus*°. His countenance was manly and expressive, and his deportment and action gave a wonderful effect to tyrannic rage. He knew no more of music than barely singing in tune.

° Life of Garrick. V. I. p. 25.

but then I taught him. He learnt from me the tone, the pathos, and the denunciation of vengeance, on his parting with *Axalla*.

" ————— Sate my revenge.

" The Tartar is my bane ; I cannot bear him ;

" Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly,

" Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever."

TAM. AND. III.

THERE is a lurking propensity in the disposition of man, that hankers after situations in his pursuits through life, which nature never meant him to fill. He is thereby goaded onward through the bent of his own mistaken talents, and taught to aim at impossible attainments.

IN no situation is this maxim more strongly evinced, than in the profession of an actor.

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His admired excellence, was in suiting the action to the airs : and according to Mr Rich's report, I have always formed to myself, in idea, such an acting finger in the person of Walker, as when I beheld Mr Digges in the fulness of his powers. Walker's *Macbeth* was chiefly followed for the humour, ease and gaiety he assumed in the part, which, more than his voice or musical talents, supported the *Beggars Opera* in its original run. The temporary pun upon this piece was, that it made *Rich* gay, and *Gay* rich. Miss Fenton, afterwards Duchess of Bolton, was the *Polly*. Walker had an unfortunate turn for inebriety and dissipation ; and died in low circumstances, in Ireland, about the year 1744.

The sock and the buskin are seldom worn with equal dignity and ease by the same person. There are such a variety of natural and acquired requisites necessary in the different walks of the stage, that equal perfection thro' the whole is rarely to be found in an individual; and we scarcely remember an instance, where performers, male or female, possessed an inferior talent in any one line, that they did not forcibly attach themselves to that.

MRS CIBBER, the celebrated tragedian of the last school, wished to lessen those unrivaled powers, by obtruding herself upon the town in comic characters. Her first *Constantia*, and the *Widow Belmour*, undermined that fabric of excellence she had reared a few nights before in *Juliet* and *Alicia**.

MR BROWN, so well remembered by the frequenters of the Theatre of Edinburgh, for his

“ * This actress, whose tones of voice were so expressive of all the tender passions, and was by nature formed for tragic representation, was unaccountably desirous of acting characters of gaiety and humour, to which she was an absolute stranger; she had no idea of comedy, but such as implied a representation of childish simplicity.”

LIFE OF GARRICK, V. I. p. 187.

his inimitable performance of the *Copper Captain*, persisted in believing, to the day of his death, that tragedy was his *forte*; and chose rather to perform his *Richard* and *Chamont* to thin houses, than to exhibit, to crowded benches, his attractive comic talents, so justly applauded and admired in the comedy of *Rule a Wife*.

AND Mr Rich, who gave birth to *Harlequin*, who was the first machinist of the age, and in which line he has not yet been equalled, would have preferred performing the part of *Cato*, with six people in the pit, to exhibiting in his natural cast, to constant crowded and overflowing houses; although he alone could partake of the profits.

MORE than once, upon entering his box in the corner, and beholding the house crowded to the representations of Mr Barry and Miss Nossiter, have I heard him, in a low, but satirical tone, exclaim, "What, are you come? Much good may it do you—I envy not your taste."

HE had less cause to be solicitous for the success of his actors, either in tragedy or
Z z z comedy,

comedy, as he had an inexhaustable fund within himself of never-failing attraction; for from the first night of a new pantomime announced by him, he was certain of crowded houses till the close of the season.

I HAVE been informed, that from the introduction of his *Harlequin Sorcerer* in 1717, to the magnificent spectacle of the Coronation in 1761, during the run of which he died, there was not one of his productions that did not succeed, having been performed at least forty or fifty nights successively. "Such a profusion of fine cloaths were exhibited in the last mentioned shew, of velvet, silk, fatten, lace, feathers, jewels, pearls, and a variety of ornaments, as had not been seen upon any stage. The scenery and music were correspondent to the grandeur of the ceremony, which was displayed to crowded houses for near two months together*."

MR RICH, distinguished in the play-bills by the name of *Lun*, was the son of Mr Christopher Rich, patentee of Drury Lane, who cultivated and encouraged singing and dancing

* Life of Garrick, V. I. p. 330.

dancing exotics, in preference to established plays, the natural performances of a Theatre. In this, the son seemed to have inherited the attachments of the father, which perhaps were heightened by an ineffectual attempt in some principal tragedy characters. Disappointed in that walk, he therefore had recourse to the cultivation of the genius which was inherent to his nature.

HE selected from the heathen fables, serious stories, such as *Orpheus and Euridice*, *Perseus and Andromeda*, and the *Rape of Proserpine*, and mingling with them grotesque and risible characters, composed that motley kind of entertainment, known by the name of Pantomime, in which he was eminently successful, having a head to invent, with strength and agility to execute changes and deceptions the most surprising, and almost incredible to a beholder, especially at first sight. And notwithstanding the absurdities and improbabilities with which they were made up, they never failed in their attractions; for, however the grave critic might rail at and ridicule them, he would not fail to renew his visits to *laugh* at their fooleries; and altho' he

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contemned the inconsistencies with which he was diverted, he laughed, he knew not why, but he did laugh, his thoughts were deluded, and the effects of merriment thus answered.

“FROM success of the original attempt,” says Cibber, “sprung forth that succession of monstrous medleys, that have so long infested the stage, and which arose upon one another alternately at both houses, outvying, in expence, like contending bribes on both sides at an election, to secure a majority of the multitude. But so it is, truth may complain and merit murmur with what justice it may, the few will never be a match for the many, unless authority should think fit to interpose, and put down their poetical drams, those gin-shops of the stage, that intoxicate its auditors, and dishonour their understandings, with a levity for which I want a name.”

IF I am asked, (after my condemning these fooleries myself) how I came to assent, or continue my share of expence to them? I have no better excuse for my error, than confessing it. I did it against my conscience; and had not virtue enough to starve by opposing
a multitude,

a multitude, that would have been too hard for me*."

MR GARRICK, with all his attractive powers, found it necessary to call in the aid of pantomime : in one of them he introduced a speaking *Harlequin*. In a prologue to it, he paid the following tribute to the memory of Rich, then lately deceased.

" When *Lun* appear'd, with matchless art and whim,
 " He gave the pow'r of speech to every limb ;
 " Tho' mask'd and mute, convey'd his quick intent,
 " And told in frolic gestures all he meant.
 " But now the motley coat, and sword of wood,
 " Require a tongue to make them understood†."

MR RICH's executive faculties were in their wane before I went to London ; I therefore never saw any of his public exhibitions ; but I have frequently beheld him go through detached scenes in his dining-room, and upon the lawn at Cowley ; particularly his catching the butterfly, and the statue scene ; and on his last revival of the *Sorcerer*, I saw him practise the hatching of *Harlequin* by the heat of the sun, in order to point out the business

* Cibber, c. 15. p. 300. † Prologue to *Harlequin's Invasion*.

business to Miles, who, tho' most excellent in the line of dumb significance, found it no easy matter to retain the lesson he had taught him.

THIS certainly was a master-piece in dumb-shew. From the first chipping of the egg, his receiving motion, his feeling the ground, his standing upright, to his quick *Harlequin* trip round the empty shell, through the whole progression, every limb had its tongue, and every motion a voice, which "spoke with most miraculous organ," to the understandings and sensations of the observers.

IT was in a former representation of this pantomime, that his name became eternised by Pope.

"Immortal Rich! how calm he sits at ease,
 "Midst snows of paper, and fierce hail of pease;
 "And proud his Mistress' orders to perform,
 "Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.
 "The forests dance, the rivers upward rise,
 "Whales sport in woods, and dolphins in the skies;
 "And last, to give the whole creation grace,
 "Lo! one vast egg produces human race*."

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* Remarks, ver. 261. *Immortal Rich!* Mr John Rich, master of the Theatre Royal in Covent-Garden, was the first that excelled this way. DUNCIAD, B. III. p. 172.

AMIDST Mr Rich's numerous admired excellencies in the pantomimical business, a contemporary writer describes " his taking leave of *Columbine* as most graceful and affecting. His consummate skill in teaching others to express the language of the mind by action, was evident from the great number of actors he produced to fill up the inferior parts of his mimic scenes. *Pantaloön*, *Pierrot*, the *Clown*, and all the other various characters, he formed himself ; and to his instructions we owed a *Hippisley*, a *Nivelon*, a *La Guerre*, an *Arthur*, and a *Laloufe*; all excellent performers in these diverting mummeries."

AMONG a number of singularities, most commonly attendant upon great genius, and high spirits, he possessed a crowd of virtues, which superabundantly over-balanced his harmless oddities. He was an affectionate husband, and a tender father, just in all his dealings, loved conviviality, and a friend; and was charitable and humane. His acts of benevolence, and neighbourly kindness, are yet fresh in the memory of many of the families in the vicinity of Cowley and Uxbridge,

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where his loss was felt and regretted; and where a long list of pensioners were left behind him to lament his loss.

S E C T. XX.

Party prejudices—How they operated with respect to the performance of Douglas—Upon other productions of the same author—Riot in the Canongate Theatre, occasioned by the song of Culloden—On the performance of High Life Below Stairs—Bad effects of admitting strangers behind the scenes—Its custom abolished—Decision of the Lords, respecting disturbances in the front of the house—In favour of the manager—Consequences of those regulations.

ON my engagement in Drury-Lane, after my first season in Edinburgh, the tragedy of *Douglas*, "*still harping upon my daughter*," was the theme of my song, and *Young Norval*, of all others, the part I was fond of. I determined, therefore, upon that, as my opening character. I had provided for the purpose, before I left Edinburgh, a Highland dress, accoutered, *cap-a-pee*, with a broad sword, shield and dirk, found upon the field of Culloden. But here, as usual, fresh impediments arose. Lord Bute's administration,

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from causes unnecessary here to enter upon, was become so unpleasing to the multitude, that any thing, confessedly Scotch, awakened the embers of dissension, and fed the flame of party. Mr Garrick therefore put a direct negative, at once, upon my appearance in *Douglas*; and, as on a former occasion, *Oroonoko* was substituted in its place; for even to have performed the play of *Douglas* would have been hazardous, and to have exhibited the Highland dress upon the stage, imprudence in the extreme. Could I have supposed at that period, that I should live to see the tartan plaid universally worn in the politest circles, and its colours the predominating fashion among all ranks of people in the metropolis?

To such a height of prejudice were political discussions at that day carried, that when a tragedy, written by the author of *Douglas*, approved of by Mr Garrick, and upon the point of being brought forward, was understood to be the production of Mr Home, such remonstrances were made against it, merely from his being patronized by Lord Bute, as intimidated the manager from his purpose. The author was informed by Mr
Garrick,

Garrick, that unless he altered the title of his play, and procured for it some adopted father, he could not possibly venture to bring it out. Mr Home immediately complied ; he changed the name of the play from *Rivenc*, the principal character, to that of the *Fatal Discovery* ; and prevailed upon a friend, then a student in one of the universities, I believe, Cambridge, to profess himself the *author*, who, as such, acquired the freedom of the Theatre Royal of Drury-Lane ; and, I am informed, possesses it to this day.

THE play was performed, and universally well received ; but either the real author, or some of his friends, being unable to keep the secret any longer, the truth came out, and after the twelfth night, Mr Garrick was threatened with having his house burnt down, if he did not immediately suspend the performance of the play ; an injunction, with which, however unreasonable, he thought it advisable to comply.

Mr ARNOT, in his remarks upon the theatrical occurrences of the city of Edinburgh, observes, that it will be necessary to take notice of certain incidents which had been

been omitted in the course of his narration. These were, "*the riot of Culloden, the disturbance upon the farce of High Life Below Stairs, and the tragedy of Douglas.*"

THE last, we have already particularly dwelt upon; the preceding ones are so minutely described, and we trust with such a distinct accuracy, that we shall transcribe the passages in the author's own words.

"AFTER the rebellion 1745, the divided spectators frequently displayed in the Theatre a spirit of political dissension. Upon the anniversary of the battle of Culloden 1749, this animosity rose to a height which threatened consequences of a serious nature. Certain military gentlemen who were in the play-house, called out to the band of music to play *Culloden**. This was regarded by the audience as ungenerously and insolently upbraiding the country with her misfortunes. Resenting it accordingly, they ordered the band to play, *you're welcome Charles Stuart*†. The musicians complying, instantly

* A tune composed in order to commemorate the battle fought near that place.

† A song in the opposite interest.

ly a number of officers attacked the orchestra with drawn swords, and leaped upon the stage. Among them was the son of a chieftain who had drawn the Pretender on to his rash attempt, by offering to join him with his clan, and who, upon the Prince's landing, raised his clan, it is true; but, instead of fulfilling his engagements, joined the royal army. This young gentleman, leaping upon the stage, to display the zealouſness of his loyalty, slipped his foot, and fell flat upon the stage. The spectators being tickled with the circumstances, an immense peal of laughter burst through the house, which exasperated the indignation of the officers. Mean time, fiddle-sticks being unable to cope with polished steel, the musicians fled; but the military were not long able to remain masters of the field. They were assailed from the galleries with apples, snuff-boxes, broken forms, in short, with every thing missile that could be laid hold of. The officers at once consulted their safety, and went in quest of revenge, by quitting the stage, in order to attack the galleries, which they stormed sword in hand. The inhabitants of these upper regions defended themselves from the
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fury of the soldiers, by barricading their doors. The Highland chairmen, learning the nature of the quarrel, with their poles attacked the officers in the rear, who, being neither able to advance nor retreat, were obliged to surrender at discretion, leaving the chairmen masters of the field."

"LUCKILY no misfortune of any consequence happened in this fray; and, to prevent similar disturbances, bills were next day posted up, wherein it was notified in large rubricks, that, for the future, the band of music was not to play any tunes at the desire of the audience, but select pieces appointed by the managers."

"ABOUT twenty years ago, the practice of giving vails to servants universally prevailed through Scotland. Nothing can be conceived meaner, on the part of a master, than permitting his servants to be paid by others than himself; nothing more inhospitable towards guests, than suffering them, in a manner, to pay for their entertainment. Nothing can tend more to make servants rapacious, insolent, and profligate, than allowing

ing them to display their address in extracting money from the visitors of their lord; yet this custom had crept in universally. Its bad effects had already been severely felt, when an outrage of the footmen in the play-house displayed the evil in so strong a light, as to occasion its redress."

"ALTHOUGH it is the province of the stage to lash the vices, and ridicule the follies of the people in all ranks; yet, soon after the farce of *High Life Below Stairs* was published, the footmen, taking it in high dudgeon, that a farce, reflecting on their fraternity should be exhibited, resolved that it should be no more performed. Accordingly, upon the second night of its being announced in the bills, as a part of the entertainment, Mr Love, one of the managers, came upon the stage, and read a letter, containing the most violent threatenings, both against the actors and the house, in case the piece should be represented; declaring, that above seventy people had agreed to sacrifice *fame, honour and profit* to prevent it. Notwithstanding this fulmination, the performers were ordered to go on. That servants might not be kept in

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the cold, nor induced to tittle in the adjacent ale-houses, while they waited for their masters, the humanity of the gentry had provided that the upper gallery should afford *gratis* admission to the servants of such persons as were attending the Theatre. Yet, did the only part of the spectators, which were admitted for nothing, presume to forbid the entertainment of their masters, because it exposed the vices of their own order. No sooner was the piece begun, than a prodigious noise was heard from the footmens gallery: they were ordered to be silent, but ineffectually. Many of the gentlemen discovered, among this noisy crew, their individual servants. When these would not submit to authority, their masters, assisted by others in the house, went up to the gallery; and it was not till after a battle, and that the servants were fairly overpowered, and thrust out of the house, that quietness could be restored."

"So daring an insult made it not only necessary that the servants should be deprived of the freedom of the play-house, which they had so grossly abused, but that the practice
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of giving vails, so pernicious to their morals, should be abolished. The gentlemen of the county of Aberdeen had the merit of being the first to make a resolution neither to give, nor allow their servants to receive, any money from their visitors, under the name of drink-money, card-money, &c. ; and instead of it, to augment their wages. They were followed by the gentlemen of the county of Edinburgh, by the Faculty of Advocates, and other respectable public bodies ; and the practice was utterly exploded over all Scotland*."

Two theatrical reformations took place during my management, which I cannot help deeming worthy of notice.

It had been a custom, before the Theatre came into my hands, for gentlemen to procure admittance at the stage door, who most generally sought it under the impulse of inebriety. The green-room was consequently open to a variety of visitors ; and the ladies dressing-rooms liable to the obtrusions of

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* History of Edinburgh, B. III. p. 374.

effrontery or design. The business of the actors was impeded, and the scenery interspersed with objects visibly actuated by intoxication, and, of course, at war with the two galleries, which interrupted the performance, and gave offence to the sober part of the house. To these intrusions, I judged it necessary instantly to put a stop.

THIS custom was prevalent in my memory at both houses in London. Mr Garrick first threw it into ridicule, in the person of the *Fine Gentleman*, in his farce of *Letbe*, so happily hit off by Mr Woodward*; and afterwards with a strong hand abolished its existence. I myself saw the stage door of Drury-

* "*Fine Gent.* I dress in the evening, and go generally behind the scenes of both play houses; not, you may imagine, to be diverted with the play, but to intrigue, and shew myself—I stand upon the stage—talk aloud—and stare about—which confounds the actors, and disturbs the audience. Upon which the galleries, who hate the appearance of one of us, begin to *hiss*, and cry *off, off*—While I undaunted stamp my foot so—loll with my shoulder thus—take snuff with my right hand, and smile scornfully—thus.—'This exasperates the savages, and they attack us with volleys of suck'd oranges and half-eaten pippins.'—

LETBE, p. 18.

Drury-Lane, when I belonged to that house, shut against one of the first princes of the blood.

It was a practice also in Edinburgh, among a particular set of young men, through the desire of fun, as they were pleased to term it, or the kicking up a dust in the Theatre, to behave, on any trifling occasion, in a riotous manner, to maltreat the door-keepers, if they dared to oppose them, and carry it off with impunity. One of these gentlemen, for wantonly ill-treating one of the servants of the house on his post, and in the exercise of his duty, was secured, and retained in custody till he procured a person to be answerable for his appearance the following day. For this his apprehension and detainure, because it had been put in execution without the assistance of a peace-officer, was I, as manager, prosecuted by the offending party for *false imprisonment*, as he thought proper to stile it, and a breach of *Magna Charta*.

THE cause was tried, and finally given in my favour, by the Lords of Session; when an injunction was delivered from the bench by the late Lord President, "That whenever
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the smallest indication appeared of an intention to commit a riot within the walls of the Theatre, the door-keepers and servants of the house should be instructed to apprehend the delinquent, and deliver him up to the guard. Because, as had been contended for, and very justly observed, the audience might be thrown into confusion, the grossest irregularities committed, and the offender fled, before a town-officer, if not accidentally present, could possibly be procured."

THE afore said grievances, by these means, were effectually suppressed. So sensible are the audience of the advantages derived from the scenes being kept clear, that, I am confident, if a stranger was now seen between the wings, they would not suffer the play to proceed till the object of their displeasure should be removed*. The servants at the doors

* This grievance cannot be better described than in the words of Colley Cibber. "Those idle gentlemen," he says, "seemed more delighted to be pretty objects themselves, than capable of any pleasure from the play; who took their daily stands where they might best elbow the actor, and come in for their share of the auditors attention. In many a laboured scene of the warmest humour, and of the most affecting passion, have I seen the best actors disconcerted, while these buzzing musquitos have been fluttering round their eyes

doors of the Theatre, by the before-mentioned decree, are enabled to maintain their posts with a confident and respectful idea of the situation in which they are stationed, and the audience are permitted, without molestation, to enjoy those amusements for which they are met.

BUT although the removal of the first of these grievances yielded comfort to the performers behind the scenes, and the latter diffused stillness and quiet before the curtain, both the one and the other affixed a rooted dislike against the manager, among a certain description of men, whose favourite evening pursuits those regulations had restrained. And I have good reasons to suppose, from after consequences, that the old adage of, "The remedy is worse than the disease," may
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and ears. I have been the more copious upon this head, that it might be judged, how much it stood us upon to have got rid of those improper spectators I have been speaking off: for whatever regard we might draw by keeping them at a distance from our stage, I had observed, while they were admitted behind our scenes, we but too often shewed them the wrong side of our tapestry; and thus many a tollerable actor was the less valued, when it was known what ordinary stuff he was made of."

CIBBER, p. 342.

with respect to me, as manager, with too much propriety be applied. For I am sorry to say, that on some occasions I have experienced very unpleasant effects from my having persisted to do my duty in the situation in which I was placed.

No man is without his faults, nor no manager without his enemies ; some must consequently have fallen to my lot ; and the numbers of the latter were not diminished by the regulations before stated. The beaux being denied their evenings lounge behind the curtain, and the bucks deprived of their noisy freedoms in the front ; they reviled the cause of their forced compliance with order and regularity, and their voices of course, in all other respects, ran counter to the measures of the manager. He was censured for accidents which were out of his power to prevent : He was blamed for things he had done, and condemned for things he had not done : for, right or wrong, with those who were predetermined to be displeased, his arrangements must be exploded.

S E C T. XXI.

*Two companies at the same time in Edinburgh—
Effects of two Theatres formerly in London—
In Dublin—Lists of the two companies in Edinburgh—Discussions before the Lords of Session
—Their interlocutors respecting the Theatre
Royal—Mrs Billington there.*

THE present season, 1793, having commenced before I had it in my power to lay the foregoing sheets before the public eye; and a circumstance more momentous to myself, the Theatre, and the Public, than any thing that has formerly occurred in the dramatic line, having recently taken place, I think it necessary to comprize, at least the out-lines of that event, within the limits of the present work.

MR KEMBLE, from the Dean of Faculty's decret-arbitral upon the mutual missives of November 2. 1791, already inserted, and explained*, preferred a claim to perform in the

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* See page 202.

city of Edinburgh, independent of the Theatre Royal. With this intent, he takes the Circus, and advertises to open it as a Theatre, in direct violation of the laws of the land, and in contempt of the King's Royal Patent; under which the existing Theatre had continued to be opened for five and twenty years.

THE supposition of two Theatres existing in Edinburgh, even increased as it is in size, and the number of its inhabitants, cannot for a moment be entertained by those who are the least conversant in stage matters.

TWO play-houses in the city of London, within the present century, were ruinous to each other. Cibber, on this head, makes the following declaration: "It may be worth the public observation, if any thing I have said of it can be so, that *one* stage may, as I have proved it has done, very laudably support itself, by such spectacles only as are fit to delight a sensible people; but the equal prosperity of *two* stages has always been of a very short duration *."

A THEATRICAL

* Colley Cibber, p. 274.

A THEATRICAL rivalry in my time, took place in Dublin. Mottop in Smock-Alley, and Barry and Woodward, in a new Theatre in Crow-street, were the contending parties. The exertions of friends on each side, supported the rival houses for a time; but the result of the opposition proved, in the end, the ruin of both. The legislature at length interfered, and the dramatic amusements, by an act of parliament, were confined in that city to *one* Theatre.

THE present season at the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh, commenced on Saturday, January the 12th, under the direction of Mrs Esten, in consequence of her lease for a year; Mr Williamson having been appointed acting manager.

PERCY, *Earl of Northumberland*, and the musical entertainment of the *Highland Reel*, were the opening pieces. Mrs Whitlock, an actress of established merit, made her first appearance on that Stage, in the part of *Elwina*; and Mr Whitlock, late manager of the Theatre Royal of Newcastle, in *Earl Raby*.

THE following list at that period composed the company.

L I S T

OF THE COMPANY AT THE THEATRE ROYAL,

1793.

✓ Messrs Wilson,	✓ Mrs Whitlock,
Whitlock,	✓ Nunns,
✓ Chalmers,	✓ Warrell,
✓ Lamash,	Rowson,
✓ Scriven,	Charteris,
✓ Nunns,	Bland,
✓ Baker,	Baker,
Hallion,	G. Wilson,
Bland,	✓ Miss Fontenelle,
Bland jun.	Harley,
Egan,	Hopkins,
Warrell,	✓ Mrs Jackson.
✓ Meadows,	
Charteris,	
Charteris jun.	
Mountfort,	
Williamson.	

Messrs Middleton, a principal tragedian, and
Bowden, in the vocal line,
were engaged for a certain number of nights.

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THOUGH Mr Kemble had removed from the Theatre Royal, at the expiration of his lease, it now appeared evident that he was determined to persist in setting up a rival Theatre in Edinburgh, for which purpose he had agreed with the very numerous proprietors of the Circus, for a lease of that subject, as a proper place for carrying on the adventure, with a considerable party to support him in the project. A protest, therefore, was immediately taken against Mr Kemble, intimating to him, that to act there for gain was equally against law, and against the rights of the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh, and that the trustee for Mr Jackson and the creditors, was disposed to avail himself of all the powers the law might afford for repressing such a measure.

MR KEMBLE, however, persisted in his purpose, and, about the middle of January, advertised that he was to open a Theatre upon the 21st. A bill of suspension and interdict was forthwith prepared for the respondents, and presented to Lord Swinton Ordinary upon the 19th, in order to prevent Mr Kemble's proceeding to execute his purpose.

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A DECLARATOR of trust was also raised against the patentees, in order to have the patrimonial right in the patent ascertained, and the executed summons was produced along with the bill. Mr Kemble, on the other hand, thought proper to present a bill of suspension, praying for a prohibition against being troubled or molested by the respondents.

MEAN time, he prepared to follow up his advertisements, with exhibiting those theatrical performances he had so repeatedly announced. The alterations of the Circus were at length completed; the stage was brought forward into the area which had formerly been used for equestrian exercises, the remainder of that place forming the pit, which was inclosed with a semicircle of boxes. The whole was fitted up with considerable expence, in a shewy theatrical stile; and on the 21st of January the house was opened, under the name of the New Theatre, with the comedy of the *Rivals*, and the farce of *Peeping Tom*.

L I S T

OF THE COMPANY AT THE CIRCUS,

1793.

✓ Messrs Kemble,

✓ Lee-Lewes,

✓ Woods,

✓ Archer,

✓ Swendall,

✓ Fox,

✓ C. Kemble,

✓ Siddons jun.

✓ Edwin,

✓ Bell,

✓ Sparks,

✓ Whitmore,

✓ Moreton,

✓ Clark,

✓ Rubery,

✓ Crew,

✓ Price,

Mrs Kemble,

✓ Lee-Lewes,

✓ Woods,

✓ Rubery,

✓ Walcot,

✓ Edwin,

Miss Ross,

✓ Satchell,

THE Lord Ordinary immediately heard counsel upon the bills of suspension. The respondents produced the letter of Mr Dundas's secretary* ; but the Duke of Hamilton's original consent having happened to be mislaid, it was denied upon the part of Mr Kemble,

* Appendix, No. XXIII.

Kemble, that any such consent had been given, although his own agent was possessed at the time of the Duke's letter, signifying that his Grace had given the consent in question to Mrs Esten*. In these circumstances, the Lord Ordinary did not chuse to grant an interim interdict, but took the cause to report, and ordered memorials. In the mean time, the Duke of Hamilton wrote the following letter to Mrs Bennet :

London, 21st January 1793.

" I HAVE consented to Mrs Esten's acting under the patent for the Edinburgh Theatre, in consequence of the lease she has obtained from Mr Jackson's trustees.

(Signed) " HAMILTON and BRANDON."

ON the other hand, the annexed letter from Mr Dundas was produced :

MY LORD, *Wimbledon, 22d January 1793.*

" I HAD determined to take no part in the present disputes about the Edinburgh Theatre, and it is still my wish not to do it ; but if any advantage is taken of any *supposed* consent given by the Duke of Hamilton, I au-
thorise

• See Appendix, No. XXV.

thorise your Lordship, the Lord Provost, and the Dean of Faculty to act in my name, as you think most expedient for the general satisfaction and amusement of the town of Edinburgh ; and whatever you do, I shall approve of. And I am, &c.

(Signed) HENRY DUNDAS."

THE application upon which this letter was obtained, does not appear, nor upon what grounds the gentlemen mentioned in the above letter proceeded in exercising the discretionary power thereby committed to them. This much, however, is certain, that they did not follow out Mr Dundas's original intention, of hearing parties in the first place ; for the respondents were not called before them, nor any enquiry made concerning the authenticity or date of the Duke of Hamilton's consent, or notification thereof to Mr Dundas, nor into what had been done in reliance upon the verbal and written intimation from Mr Dundas, that he was not to interfere. In fact, as early as the 8th of September, Mr Kemble had the best of all evidence that the Duke's consent was disposed of ; and if he concealed this circumstance from Mr Dundas, in his after communications, he

D d d

certainly

certainly was guilty of an improper disguise*. The following document, however, was forthwith communicated to the respondents.

“ *Edinburgh, 28th January 1793.*

As authorised by the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, we hereby consent to Mr Kemble acting under the patent for the Edinburgh Theatre. (Signed) RO. DUNDAS,

HENRY ERSKINE,
THOS. ELDER.”

MEMORIALS were lodged upon the 29th January, and on the 6th of February, the following interlocutor was pronounced: “ The Lord Ordinary having considered this bill, “ and memorials *hinc inde*, and heard parties “ procurators fully thereon, and advised with “ the Lords, passes the bill on caution, and “ prohibits and discharges the within Stephen “ Kemble, or any person acting under him, “ from opening any Theatre for the performance of plays, interludes, or other entertainments of the stage, within the city of “ Edinburgh, or suburbs thereof, or within “ 20 miles of the said city, all in terms of the “ statute 10th of George II. c. 28.”

MR

* See Appendix, No. XXIII. and XXIV.

MR KEMBLE reclaimed, and the Lords appointed his petition to be answered on Thursday, February 14th, which order was afterwards prorogated to Tuesday the 19th.

IN the interim, a second petition was put in by Mr Kemble, offering, on the interdict being suspended, to consign the profits of his house, to be afterwards disposed of by Mr Solicitor, the *senior* counsel for the respondents; and this was followed with a minute, offering to refer to the same gentleman the terms of an arrangement for the winter. To these proposals, Mrs Bennet and Mr Playfair consented provisionally, till Mrs Esten could be heard from; and the Lords superseded advising the petition for a fortnight. Mr Solicitor forthwith directed the interdict to be suspended in the mean time, and the profits of the New Theatre to be consigned, subject to his disposal. But Mrs Esten having taken advice in England, upon the printed papers in the cause, which were transmitted to her, she, agreeable to that advice, determined to rely on the judgment of the Lords, and directed her counsel to prepare answers accordingly.

D d d 2

THESE

THESE answers were submitted in obedience to the appointment of the Lords ; and on Thursday, February the 26th, the cause was reheard, and the former interlocutor confirmed, which finally decided this important question before the Lords. By this decret the Theatre Royal was established in its natural and ancient privileges, and once more opened with the fulness of its powers.

AT that particular juncture, the *amateurs* of harmony were regaled with those delicious banquets, so richly and luxuriantly furnished by the inimitable talents of Mrs BILLINGTON. Her engaging mode of expression, her wonderful execution, and her extensive compass of voice, are not in the scope of language to describe ; they must be heard, and felt, before any adequate conception can be formed of her captivating powers.

S E C T. XXII.

Supplementary observations—Upon the stage in general—Natural propensity to dramatic representations—Their estimation among the ancients—Origin of stage prejudices—Robin Hood's plays—Popular in Scotland—Disturbances in Edinburgh attending their suppression—Stage exhibitions vindicated—Their propriety—Their utility.

AMONG our various researches on the present subject, occurrences have started, and suggestions arisen, subsequent to the formation of the early part of this work, which, however out of time or place, near as we are now drawing towards a finish, we cannot forbear holding up to the reader's view.

THE origin of the stage, and progress thro' its infancy, are nearly as inexplicable, and as much involved in darkness, as the organization of those states, in which the light of the drama exhibited its first dawn. Theatrical ideas,

ideas, and a strong incentive towards their exhibition, seem to be inherent in man; which impregnate with his nature, and shew themselves in a rude, or more polished state, as the people, by whom they are cherished, make advances in the refinements of civilization.

THE savage Indian, before his naked audience, with brandished *tomahawk*, enacts his recent bloody feats, and with expanding features, describes the tortures of his prostrate captive, expiring beneath the foot of the scalper.

THE Arcadean shepherds, with their hooks and oaten pipes, in alternate stanzas, chant out their rival strains, in praise of coy, but lovely Daphne, while the listening rustics decide the contest, and present the bay.

THE learned, the enlightened, the accomplished auditor, feeds his dramatic impulse upon the conjunct efforts of action and elocution, aided by the cost and pageantry of dress, with the charms of scenic spectacle, or the notes of some syren's magic voice, accompanied by the enchanting sounds of a full band;

band; and pays the admired exhibitor for the exertion of those abilities which he envies and applauds. •

SIR RICHARD STEEL's accomplished man of fashion says, "You smile to see me so complaisant to one whom I *pay* for his visit; now, I own, I think it not enough barely to pay those whose talents are superior to our own, (I mean such talents as would become our condition if we had them). Methinks we ought to do something more, than barely gratify them for what they do at our command, only because their fortune is below us*."

THE first attainment of stage method, we have any knowledge of, was among the Greeks. Had the whole of the works of Aristotle been extant, we should have been favoured with a distinct account of the authors, actors, and performances, from the first formation of dialogue, to the time of that celebrated genius†.

THESPIS

* *Conscious Lovers*, p. 4c.

† A book called *Διδασκαλία*. The author, the famous Aristotle, flourished in the time of Alexander the Great; he was preceptor to that great warrior.

THESPIs is generally allowed to have been the father of the stage. Æschylus* fostered and added to its improvements; and Sophocles† raised it to that height of perfection to which it arrived in that more polished æra of those enlightened states. It is certain, however, that there were players long before Thespis. This assertion we are enabled to make from the declaration of Plato. From Thespis to Æschylus, a space of an hundred years, we know very little of the progress of the drama. Horace furnishes us with the principal information.

“Post hunc personæ pallæque repertor honestæ . . .

“Æschylus et Modicis instravit pulpita tignis,

“Et docuit magnumque loqui, nitique cothurno.”

A. POET. l. 178.

HOMER is styled by Aristotle a composer of dramatic poetry†; and by Herodotus and Strabo

* He writ ninety plays, of which six only remain. He was killed by the fall of a tortoise, which an eagle dashed against his bald pate, mistaking it for a stone.

VAL. MAX. 9. 12. PLIN. 10. 3.

† He wrote one hundred and twenty plays, whereof only seven remain. Lucan says he was choaked with a grape stone.

‡ μιμητικὸς δραματικῆς ποιητῆς

Strabo we are told, that the elder Phrinius was successor to Thespis, and that there were plays* written by Epigenes and others†, all anterior to Æschylus.

DRAMATIC compositions, and the writers and performers of them, were held in the highest estimation by the Grecian states. If they formed no part of their religious ceremonies, they were, at least, looked up to with a great degree of veneration.

PLATO censured Minos for making war against the Athenians, because the numbers of tragic poets and writers of plays who resided among them, would affix a stigma upon him and his family, which could never be erased.

So inviolable were the funds that had been raised for the exhibition of their dramatic shews, that it required the skill and credit of a Demosthenes, to broach, even a hint to the people, that the theatrical money should

E e e be

* *παικτικὴ δρᾶματις.*

† Pratinas, Alcæus, Phrinius, jun. Chærilus, Cephisodorus, Appaltophanes,

be applied to the service of the state, by making use of it for carrying on the war.

“WAS it me, *O Athenians*, who said that the money raised for the exhibition of our plays should ever be laid out for the necessities of the present war? No, no, Jove the Thunderer bear me witness, I would not so fatally incur the indignation of the people*.”

It is a circumstance not the least singular, in the course of human events, that a profession so revered by the polished Greeks, adopted by the accomplished Romans, cherished by the members of the church in the Christian æra, and now the favourite amusement of the British islands, which form the most powerful and enlightened empire upon earth, should have so sunk in its dignity and estimation as a science, at any intervening period, as to have had its members deemed outcasts from society, and in some parts of the world, not to have been allowed interment in consecrated ground.

•
SOME

• First Olynth.

SOME legal restrictions were indeed laid upon the actors, even by the Romans, for which we have the authority of Horace and Tacitus; but these were levelled more against the professors, than the profession itself, which they highly venerated. The former of these authors informs us, that after tragedy had reached perfection, comedy succeeded.

“ *Sed in vitium libertas excidit.*”

“ And now the comic muse again appear'd,
 “ Nor without pleasure and applause was heard;
 “ But soon her freedom rising to excess,
 “ The laws were forc'd her boldness to suppress;
 “ And when no longer licens'd to defame,
 “ She sinks to silence, with contempt and shame*.”

IN the reign of Francis the I. (1541), an accusation was exhibited against a company of actors before the parliament of Paris, but that was not in consequence of the unlawfulness or immorality of the profession, but against the ignorance and inabilities of the performers. “ *Gen non littrez, ny entendus en telles affaires.*”

E c c 2

“ THE

* FRAN. HOR. v. IV. p. 247.

"THE common people, as they came back from these plays, would publicly and loudly mock the actors, and repeat the words the players had pronounced wrong ; and the audience would say, in contempt of the performers, the Holy Ghost would not come down among them*."

WE must look towards a different quarter for the source of that inveteracy of prejudice formed against the profession of the stage, formerly so prevalent, and which has not yet totally ceased to exist.

WITH the primitive fathers of the church, under the wing of whose brotherly order, dramatic compositions had been nurtured, the objections to their continuance, it is to be presumed, originated. By them were laid the ground-work of reproach both against the frequenters and exhibitors of stage shews, then
in

* Le commune peuple, retournant desdits jense se moquoient, hautement, et publiquement par les rues desdits, jeux et des jouiers contra faisant quelque langage improprie, qu'ils avoient ou y desdits jeux, ou autre chose mal faite oriant, par derision, que le S. Esprit n'avoit point voulu descendere, et par d'autres mocquerois.

PARLIAMENT ROLL.

in their infancy in modern Europe. Those religious enthusiasts planted the whole church-artillery against every thing that bore the smallest resemblance of Heathen worship.

STAGE subjects, deduced from ancient poets, founded upon Pagan mythology, were consequently exploded as the grossest abominations; the Joves and the Junos, Appollos and Venuses, let down between the cloudings in their celestial chariots, were ex-crated as mere emblems of idolatry.

THE cry against a profession, in which are to be found the noblest lectures for the human understanding, and which, if properly conducted, must ever be acknowledged as the most rational amusement for the relaxation of the mind; where instruction and pleasure, the *utile dulci*, are interwoven, and may mutually be reaped, must have been raised from different motives, and from classes of men very opposite in their views.

THE well-meaning ignorant, and the designing intelligent pastors, at once began the holloo; the one sought to reform and direct,
the

the other to mislead and control. The former class, who through a conscientious zeal, had carried their scruples, even so high, as to believe the having perused an epic poem in the days of their youth, an abomination before the Lord, pronounced all kinds of dialogue, and every species of spectacle, except those of religious institution, and within the walls of their cloysters, as sinful and profane. The latter, who sought more strongly to impress the truths of their religion by deceptive signatures, and who, practising upon the vulgar, reaped advantages from a display of relics and of sacred shews, deemed those of lay-dramatists as injurious to their consequence, and hurtful to their profits. But, both the first and the last, for these different motives, were unanimous in the extermination of the devoted object. The whole round of the drama was interdicted, its compositions anathematized, and the exhibitors marked with stigma.

A BRAND impressed deep in the face of the profession, entailed upon its posterity, and of which, though the unsightliness of the scar is worn

worn out, the skin continues still to be discoloured.

Not only to represent, but to be present at theatrical representations, was, by St Austin, solemnly pronounced a most *crying sin*; and in the midst of this his inveteracy against the stage, to such a height did he carry his religious zeal, that he most earnestly implored forgiveness of his Maker, for having in his early years been *so profane* as to have read *Virgil*.

Lactantius, *Bede*, and other venerable guides, who joined in decrying stage performances, declared, "The Tale of the *Antipodes* to be only an idle story, a ridiculous romance* ; yet these, the great *luminaries* of the church, who have been solemnly canonized, and from whose opinions the profession of
an

* In the year of our Saviour 745, the Archbishop of *Mentz* met with a treatise concerning the *Antipodes*, written by *Virgilius*, Bishop of *Saltsbourg*; away flew the over zealous Archbishop, first to the Duke of *Bohemia*, and from hence to Pope *Zachry*, who, by virtue of his *infallibility*, condemned poor *Virgilius* for an heretic, because he was the author of a book, which broached such most damnable doctrine.

an actor is to this day ill spoken of. For what was the outcry of the councils and fathers against players? Nothing more, than that these heated zealots, in the rage of their religious furor, madly imagined them to be Heathen tradition-holders, to be relique-keepers of Paganism, and that their works were appropriated, and utterly devoted to the worship of false gods."

" BESIDES, these very fathers were in fact little less than players themselves; they were guilty of many devices, exclusive of the tricks of the Cybils, to endeavour to prove the truth of a religion, which, like the sun, wanted only to be seen to be revered for its brightness*."

THE multitude, endowed by nature with a promptitude for dramatic shews, having been

* Let the reader, if he pleases, consult Caufabon's exertations upon *Baronius*, *Blondel* on the *Cybils*, and the decrees of Pope Gelasius, who prohibits counterfeit prophets, counterfeit gospels, and counterfeit acts of apostles; all of which scenes, and many more, these reverend reformers, the fathers, played upon the minds of the ignorant; and acted religious chicaneries as gross as the greatest errors of the most unenlightened Paganism. ANNALS OF THE DRAMA, p. 11.

been precluded from their favourite attendance upon sacred spectacles by their formal suppression, contrived for themselves lay compositions and performances, without the pale of the church's censure.

THEY consisted of games at merry-meetings and festivals, wakes, tides, and rushbearings*, which, though not expressly theatrical, were notwithstanding of such a kind, as to be analagous with those of the drama.

THEY were more particularly in practice by the Christmas-gambolers, May-dayers, maurence-dancers, and maskers. The principal of these annual associations were the solemnization of the games of Robin Hood, and the Abbot, or Lord of Misrule.

AMONG the earliest incidents of life, I recollect seeing, in a remote part of England, one of those sets of irregulars, in that country, called *mummers*; from which appellation,
F f f

* Before the flagging, or flooring, of churches were introduced, it was a custom at the Saints Tide to cover the ground with rushes, which they bore in procession; from which practice the name of *Rushbearing* was derived.

tion, that *outré* mode of playing, commonly practiced by itinerant actors, and sometimes even upon the established Theatres, is, we presume, stiled mumming: It was composed of young men, farmers sons, and those of decent tradesmen. They had with them, as is customary, a Clown, the ancient *Fool of the Hall*: He had on a patched jacket and trowsers, with a fox's tail to his cap.

THE *first piece*, or play, comprised a kind of *Harlequin* plot, with a father, daughter, and two lovers. The fool of the hall carried off the lady, to the joy of the rustic audience; the father was reconciled, and the lovers made happy.

THE interlude represented the staggering of a drunkard, with his glass and bottle; and the conclusion, or farce, was a compound of some tricks of the fool, who was supposed to be killed; and after being tumbled about in different positions, frightened his companions from the stage, which closed the scene.

THE amusements of the evening were prefaced with a song, of perhaps thirty stanzas,
by

by way of prologue; the hereditary office, I was given to understand, of the motley fool. The purport of the composition was to announce the performers, who came on one after another, following the *Clown* in a circle, till the whole, with their characters and abilities, were pointed out to the audience.

THE first verse of this singular production I have endeavoured to recollect,

" My name it is Captain Calf-tail, Calf-tail,
 " And on my back it is plain to be seen;
 " Although I am simple, and wear a fool's cap,
 " I am dearly below'd of a queen."

THROUGH the whole of these performances, which had been handed down from father to son, with improvements and alterations for centuries past, appeared the outlines of a *Laloufe*, a *Hippesly*, and a *Lun*. But as the exhibitors had never been at a play, nor within the walls of a play-house, the originality of the performances must have been with them.

THE celebration of the game of Robin Hood and Little John, took place in the
 F f f 2 month

month of May. The inhabitants of a certain number of hamlets, or villages, selected for that purpose, met together in an open place, as central as possible ; where the two leaders, Robin and the squire, with a select party as yeomen, were chosen from amidst the vast group, who continued as spectators of the sports.

By this chosen band, the feats of Robin Hood and his merry men were enacted ; his rescuing his imprisoned followers from the sheriff of Nottingham, his robbing the Bishop of Hereford, and making him dance round an oak in Barnsdale, his contest with the pindar of Wakefield, and many other exploits of that favourite and celebrated outlaw.

THESE sports were exhibited upon a Sunday, or festival ; and so wedded were the populace to this daily amusement, that the churches were left empty by their parishioners, who crowded to pay their respects to Robin Hood.

A REVEREND prelate, when preaching before Edward VI. declared, that coming to a certain

certain town, in order to deliver a discourse, of which he had sent previous notice, instead of finding a crowded congregation awaiting his arrival, it was half an hour before the key of the church could be found, and he was informed, " This is a busy day with us ; we cannot hear you : It is Robin Hood's day : The parish are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hood. I pray you let, (*bind*) them not. I was fain (continues the Bishop) to give place to Robin Hood. I thought my rocket should have been regarded, though I should not : But it would not serve ; it was fain to give place to Robin Hood's men*."

THE Abbot, or Lord of Misrule, in England, and Abbot of Un-reason, in Scotland, presided over the Christmas revels, sustained a principal character in their interludes, entertained them with discourse, and closed the scene with an address of his own composing, by way of epilogue.

THE games of Robin Hood and Little John were exceedingly popular in Scotland,
and

* Latimer's Sermons, p. 73.

and the attempts to suppress them created no small degree of animosity and disturbance.

“WHEN the minds of the people,” says Mr Arnot, “came to be agitated with religious controversy, it was found necessary to repress the game of Robin Hood by public statue*. The populace were by no means willing to relinquish

* Sixth Parliament of Queen Marie, XX. June 1555, cap. 61.

Item, It is statute and ordained, that in all times coming, na manner of person be chosen *Robert Hude*, nor *Little John*, *Abbot of Un-reason*, *Queenis of Maii*, nor otherwise, nouthir in burgh, nor to landward, in onie time to cum; And gif ony provost, baillies, counsell, and communitie, chuse sik ane personage, as *Robert Hude*, *Little John*, *Abotis of Un-reason*, or *Queenis of Maii*, within burgh, the chusers of sik fall tine their freedome, for the space of five reitres, and otherwise, fall be punished at the Queenis grace will, and the acceptar of sik like office shall be banished foorth of the realme: And gif ony sik persones, sik as *Robert Hude*, *Little John*, *Abotis of Un-reason*, *Queenis of Maii*, beis chosen out-with burgh, and uthers landward townes, the chusers fall pay to our soveraine ladie, ten pounds, and their persones put in ward, there to remaine during the Queenis grace pleasure: And gif onie women, or others, about summer trees, singand makes perturbation to the Queenis lieges, in the passage throw burrowes, and other landward townes, the women perturbatoures, for skafrie of money, or otherwise, fall be taken, handled, and put upon the cuck-Rules of everie burgh or towne.

relinquish their favourite amusement. Year after year, the magistrates of Edinburgh were obliged to exert their authority in repressing this game, often ineffectually*.”

“ IN the year 1561, the mob were so enraged at being disappointed in *making a Robin Hood*, that they rose in mutiny, seized on the city gates, committed robberies upon strangers, and one of the ringleaders being condemned by the magistrates to be hanged, the mob forced open the jail, set at liberty the criminal and all the prisoners, and broke in pieces the gibbet erected at the cross for executing the malefactor. They next assaulted the magistrates, who were sitting in the council chamber†, and who fled to the tolbooth for shelter, where the mob attacked them, battering the doors, and pouring stones thro’ the windows. Application was made to the deacons of the corporations, to appease the tumult. Remaining, however, unconcerned spectators, they made this answer, “ *They will be magistrates alone : Let them rule*
the

* Council Register, v. IV. p. 4. 30.

† Knox’s History, p. 270.

the multitude alone." The magistrates were kept in confinement, till they made proclamation be published, offering indemnity to the rioters, upon laying down their arms. Still, however, so late as the year 1592, we find the General Assembly complaining of the profanation of the Sabbath by making of *Robin Hood plays**."

THAT strong prepossession, we have already noticed, for stage representations, so prevalent in unpurged nature, on the final suppression of the games beforementioned, burst forth in a shape more displeasing to the opposers of every mode of recreation: For we find, from respectable authority, that in the year 1601, an attempt was made avowedly, and by royal sanction, to open a house in the city of Edinburgh, for the representation of stage plays.

"THE King having that year licenced a company of comedians to act in Edinburgh, the city-clergy exclaimed loudly in their sermons against dramatic entertainments and actors,

* Book of Universal Kirk, p. 414.

actors in their session, and forbade the people to attend the play-house, on pain of church-censures. This was certainly carrying the thing farther than it ought; for the stage, under proper regulation, may be made no mean auxiliary to the pulpit; besides, whatever contributes to make life glide harmlessly on, is at least not criminal. The *young, gay, and fair*, though they did not dare to disobey their teachers, yet every where vented their indignation against their monkish austerity, while the King, who justly regarded the prohibition as an insult on his prerogative, called the members of the session before him, and ordained them to annul it. This they unwillingly did the day after, and the play-house became more crowded than ever*.”

At a more recent period, sometime between the years 1718 and 1730, I hear of a Theatre, under the direction of one Tony Alston, in a close on the north side of the High Street, near Smith's land. A Mrs Millar, at that era, was esteemed a capital actress; and was also a very handsome woman. Mr Westcombe was the principal comedian. The

G g g scheme

* Maitland's History of Scotland, v. II. p. 1294.

scheme was supported by annual tickets, subscribed for by the favourers of the drama; but, as usual, met with disapprobation from its declared opponents.

So violent were the enthusiasts even of latter days, and so enflamed the minds of their zealous and gloomy followers, against all kinds of meetings, for recreation or amusement of a public nature, that, about the beginning of this century, even at an assembly for dancing only, the company were assaulted, and the doors of the building perforated with red-hot spits.

THEIR principal objections to the establishment of stage performances were, That they held out allurements dangerous to youth: That they gave offence to the public at large, by their tendency to licentiousness: And that they were injurious to the poor.

We shall not, in reply to these allegations, launch out into that detail of argument, which naturally presses upon the subject: Suffice it to observe, that the stage, which has made a part in the entertainments of every civilized

zed state, when set in competition with their other amusements, as vehicles of instructive and rational tendency, cannot possibly suffer in the comparison. And as, from the frame and constitution of the minds of men, relaxations are necessary, those of the stage, after the closest investigation, must be favoured with a preferable existence.

YOUNG people, of every denomination, if inclined to be idle, will easily find excuses from business or study; and we appeal to the directors of youth, either masters, preceptors, or fathers, whether they would not rather prefer the beholding their pupils at the Theatre, where people of rank and liberal professions, capable of enforcing respect and decency by their presence and example, may approve or explode their conduct, rather than hear of their immoral conduct at more dangerous meetings, where they have no restrictions over them, either from a sense of decency or shame.

TALKING upon this subject some years ago with Mr Bolton of Birmingham, who
G g g 2
kept,

kept, and I believe still keeps, a most extensive work at that place, in which he then gave employment to not less than 500 hands, he assured me, that whenever his people were inclined to relax, he constantly recommended it to them to go to the play; for then, continued he, I am sure of seeing them in the morning, sober and pleased: Whereas, on the other hand, if they were to make a St Monday at foot-ball, fives, or skittles, they adjourned to the ale-house in the evening, and seldom appeared at their business the following day, or perhaps for days after. Mentioning this circumstance lately to a merchant from the same town, I was assured, that the above sentiments were those of the manufacturers, in general, in that district.

WE will not contend, that exceptionable actions and passages do not frequently exist upon the stage. But the audience have it constantly in their eye to correct them: for if there were no purchasers of ribaldry, there could be no retailers of it. "Alas!" observes Colley Cibber,

"Where's that palace, whereinto sometimes,

"Foul things intrude not?"

SHAKESPEARE.

"But

“ But I cannot allow them to impeach the profession, while they are so palpably owing to the depraved taste of the multitude, with whom casual follies are the most profitable commodities. Why should we wonder, that, time out of mind, the poor comedian, when real wit would bear no price, should deal in what would bring him most ready money*.”

BUT these liberties, which the author so much complains of in the comedies of his time, have been sufficiently exploded, and the exceptionable passages, under a decent regulation, have been corrected, or suppressed in the representation; and I am convinced, that if some of the popular pieces of those days had been now produced, with the passages they contained, they would not be suffered *one moment* to exist. The reformation thus wrought proves the truth of Colley Cibber's assertion, “ That the corruption of the Theatre is no disproof of its innate and primitive utility.”

WITH respect to the other article of objection, that the profession is injurious to the
poor,

* Colley Cibber, p. 50.

poor, we are apt to believe, that should we incline to sport in figures, and indulge in calculation, we should find it no difficult task to ascertain, by proof, that the effects of stage representations are the very reverse.

PROVIDENCE, for the well-being and existence of society, has necessarily placed mankind in a state of subordinancy; and every individual deserves well of the community, by living up to the rank in which he has been placed. Money expended by the rich flows into the pockets of the tradesmen, for the purchase of clothing, and the furnishing their equipage and tables; from thence it descends to the support of the poor, by being paid for their labour, through the several articles of consumption.

PLACES of amusement occasion an increase of expence, which, yielding employment and consumption of goods for the spinstresses, the weaver, and the cloathier, the descending advantages land ultimately in the relief of the poor.

SHUT up the places of resort for fashionable parties, and deprive them of those amusements

ments for which they have a natural relish ; and they will tire of continuing in a town, where they are debarred from rational amusements, and fly to other places divested of such a prevailing antipathy ; where the money they there expend would indeed be lost to their native poor.

THE stage, and its appendages, most certainly contribute as much to the exigencies of the state, and the aid of the community, as any society whatsoever ; that of Edinburgh more particularly so perhaps than many others. For there the frequenters of the galleries being fewer in proportion, their expences are less, and the advantages accruing to the lower order of people consequently larger. Few actors, it should be observed, are such œconomists as to become rich : The whole receipts of the Theatre, therefore, roll on to the influx of the community at large.

EVERY actor must have a lodging, must be clothed and fed. Thus, house-rents, taxes, and the venders of the necessaries of life, receive supplies from them : And the resources towards the subsistence of the poor acquire no inconsiderable share of augmentation from

from the funds of the Theatre. Since the commencement of my management, the sums collected at the doors of the Edinburgh play-house, for *charitable purposes*, have not amounted to less than *two thousand pounds sterling*.

AFTER weighing the above considerations, with that nicety which the subject requires, instead of joining in with the assertion of the zealots of the last century, the reader will agree with us in thinking, that the performances of the stage are attended with different consequences, than the vitiating the morals of youth, and distressing the poor; he will rather exclaim with us, in the words of a modern writer,

- “ For other purpose was that spot design’d,
- “ To purge the passions, and reform the mind :
- “ To give to nature all the force of art,
- “ And, while it charms the ear, to mend the heart.”

A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

A
MAGNIFICENT SPECTACLE,

ENTITLED,

THE ENTERTAINMENT

OF THE

HIGH AND MIGHTY MONARCH,

CHARLES,

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND IRELAND,

Into his Ancient and Royal City of

EDINBURGH,

THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF JUNE 1633.

Abridged from a full Copy, printed in Edinburgh the same Year.

WITHOUT the gate which is towards the west, where the streete ascendeth to Heroites Hospital did an arch arise square with the battlements and inmost side of the towne-wall; the face looking to the castle represented a ciitie situated on a rock, which, with pointed clifts, shrubs, trees, herbs, and verdure, did appeare in perspective.

THE theater under the arch was a mountaine, upon which appeared the genius of the towne, represented by a nymph; she was attired in a sea-

greene velvet mantle, her sleeves and under roabe of blue issue, with blue buskins on her feete; aboute her necke shee wore a chaine of diamonds; the dressing of her head represented a castle with turrets, her locks dangled about her shoulders.

THE mountaine, at the approach of the King's Majestie, moved, and the nymph thus spake unto him.

SIR,

“IF nature could suffer rockes to move, and abandon their natural places, this towne, founded on the strength of rockes, had, with her castle, temples, and houses, moved towards you, and besought you to acknowledge her yours, and her indwellers your most affectionate subjects—And here, Sir, she offers by me to the altar of your glorie, whole hecatombes of most happy desires:—Presenting you, Sir, who art the strong key of this little world of Great Britain, with these keyes, which cast up the gates of her affection, and designe you power to open all the springs of the hearts of these her most loyal citizens—The old forget their age, and looke fresh and young, at the sight of so gracious a prince; the young bear a part in your welcome, desiring many years of life, that they may serve you long.—Daigne then, Sir, from the highest of majestie, to looke downe on their lownesse, and embrace it; accept the homage of their humble minds, accept their grateful zeale, which they have ever carried to the highest deserts of your ancestors, and shall ever to your owne and your royal race, whilst these rocks shall be ourshadowed with buildings,
these

these buildings inhabited by men, and while men bee endued either with counsell or courage, or enjoy any peece of reason, sense, or life."

THE keyes being delivered in a bason of silver, and his majestie received by the majestrates, under a pale of state—Where the streete ascendeth proudest, beginning to turn to the gate of the old towne, he meeteth with an arch: The frontspiece of this represented in land-skip, a countrey wild, full of trees, bushes, bores, white kine; along the which appeared one great mountaine to extend itself, with the word upon it,

GRAMIUS.

IN some parts was seene the sea enriched with corral, and the mussell that conceiveth the pearle; farther off in an island, appeared a flaming mountaine, with the words,

Tibi serviet ultima Thule.

ON the chapter was a lion rampant, the words,

Imperat ipse sibi.

A COURTEN falling, the theater discovered a lady attired in tissue, her haire was dressed like a *Cornucopia*, two chaynes, one of gold, another of pearle, baudrike wayes, hung downe her shoulders; a crowne of gold hung from the arch before her; she represented the *Genius of Caledonia*.

His majestie coming neere, was welcomed with these verses by Caledonia.

THE

THE heav'ns have heard our vovves, our just desires
 Obtained are; no higher now aspires
 Our wishing thoughts, since to his native clime,
 The flower of princes, honour of his time,
 Is come, and radiant to us in his traine
 The golden age and virtues brings againe. —

THE Genius of Caledonia continues her address
 in a strain of the highest adulation and panegyric, to
 the extent of an hundred intervening lines, and ob-
 serving, that,

For as moones splendor from her brother springs,
 The peoples welfare streameth from their kings.

She concludes by exhorting the people, to

Pray that those crownes his ancestors did weare,
 His temples long, (more orient) may beare,
 That good he reach, by sweetnesse of his sway,
 That even his shadow may the bad affray;
 That heaven on him, what he desires, bestow,
 That still the glory of his greatnesse grow;
 That your begunne felicities may last,
 That no Orion doe with stormes them blast;
 That victory his brave exploits attend,
 East, west, or south, do he his forces bend,
 Till his great deads, all former deeds surmount,
 And quail the Nimbrot of the Hellespont.
 That when his well-spent care all care becalmes,
 He may in peace sleep in a shade of palmes;
 And rearing up fair trophees, that heavens may
 Extend his life to world's extreamest day.

WHERE the great streete divideth itself in two,
 upon the old foundations, inhabited by the gold-
 smiths

smiths and glovers, did an arch arise: upon the chapter was a crowne, set with this word,

Nec primam visa est similem, nec habere secundam.

AMIDST flourishes of armes, as helmes, lances, corselets, pikes, muskets, bowes, cannons, at the one side of the *abacke*, stood Mars; the word by him was,

Patrium cognoscite numen.

AT the other side, among flourishes of instruments of peace, as harpes, lutes, organs, cissers, hauboises, stood Minerva; her word,

Quo sine me.

AT the approach of the King, the theater, (a courtene drawne) manifested Mercury, with his feathered hat and his caduceus, with an hundred and seven Scottish Kings, which he had brought from the Elisian Fields; Fergus the first had a speech in Latine, which is here desired.

IN the midst of the streete there was a mountain dressed for Parnassus, where Apollo and the Muses appeared, and ancient worthies of Scotland, for learning was represented; such as Sedullius, Joannes Dunns, Bishop Elphinstoun of Aberdeen, Hector Boes, Bishop Sawers Douglass, Sir David Lindsay, Georgius Buchananus; the word over them was,

Fama super æthera noti.

THE Muses were clad in varying taffetas, cloth of silver, and purple. Melpomene, though her under

under vesture was black, yet her buskines and mantle was crimson ; they were distinguished by scutcheons, and every one had a word ; the first was Clio, who bare,

Si vis omnia tibi subjice, subjice te rationi.

which was the King's simbole when he was Prince,

APOLLO, sitting in the midst of them, was clad in crimson taffeta, covered with some purple of gold, with a bowdricke like the raine-bow, a mantle of tissue knit together above his left shoulder ; his head was crowned with laurell, with locks long and like gold ; he presented the King with a booke.

WHERE the great streete contrasteth it selfe at the descent of the eastern gate of the towne, did an arch arise. The face of this represented a heaven, into which appeared his Majesty's ascendant Virgo. She was beautified with six and twenty stares.

THE stand discovered the seven planets sitting on a throne, and Endymion.

THEY were all clad in emblematicall dressees, rich in embroidery, elegant and fanciful ; and had every one their motto, or word, as the author calls it.

MARS appeared with his haire and beard red, a sword at his side, his robe of deepe crimson taffeta, embroidered with wolves and horses ; his head bare, a helmet, and his scutcheon,

Per tela, per hastes.

VENUS had the attire of her head rising like parts in a coronet, and roses : she was in a mantle of greene damaske, embroidered with doves ;
instead

instead of her cestus, she wore a scarfe of diverse
coloures; her word,

Nullas recipit tua gloria metas.

AT a corner of the theater, from out a verdant
grove, came Endymion. He was apparelled like
a shepherd, in a long coat of crimson velvet, com-
ing over his knee; he had a wreath of flowres up-
on his head; his haire was curled and long: in
his hand he bare a sheep-hooke; on his legs were
buskines of gilt leather: These before the King
had this astioun.

ENDYMION.

Rous'd from the Latmian cave, where many years
That empress of the lowest of the spheres,
Who cheeres the night, and kept me hid apart
From mortal weights, to ease her love-sick heart;
As young as when she did me first inclose,
As fresh in beauty as the maying rose,
Endymion; that whilome kept my flocks
Upon Iona's flowry hills and rockes,
And, warbling sweet lays to my Cynthia's beams,
Out-sang the swannets of Meander's streams.—

HE proceeds to say, in a speech of thirty-six lines,
that he is dispatched by Cynthia to celebrate the
day, where all the starres of heaven are assembled;
He observes,

Nor is it strange, if they heav'ns night neglect,
Unwonted worth produceth like effect;
Then this it is thy prefence, royal youth,
Hath brought them here within an azymouth,

b

To

To tell by me, their herald, coming things,
 And what each Fate to her sterne distaffe sings :
 For what is firme decreed in heaven above,
 In yaine on earth strive mortals to improve.

THE planets then proced by rotation, in the same
 kind of verse, and at some length, to augur to
 his majesty every happiness their benign influence
 could impart. The last stanzas of each are only
 here inserted,

SATURNE.

LIFE long shall not be thrall'd to mortall deats ;
 Thus heav'ns decree, so have ordain'd the fates.

JOVE.

TILL thou the greatest be among the greats,
 Thus heav'ns ordaine, so doe decree the fates.

MARS.

THY triumphs finish shall all old debates ;
 Thus heav'ns decree, so have ordain'd the fates.

SUNNE.

THOU open shalt Parnassus' cristal gates ;
 Thus heav'ns ordaine, so doe decree the fates.

VENUS.

THY hymenean bed faire brood shall grace,
 Which on the earth continue shall their race,
 While Phœbus beams her brother emulates ;
 Thus heav'ns decree, so have ordain'd the fates.

MERCURY.

WEALTH, honour, armes, and arts, shall grace thy states ;
 Thus heav'ns ordaine, so doe decree the fates.

THE

THE MOONE.

MALICE, deceit, rebellion, impudence,
 Beyond the Garamants, shall pack them hence,
 With every monster that thy glory hates ;
 Thus heav'ns decree, so have ordain'd the fates.

ENDYMION then rejoining, directs his concluding
 lines to the populace,

AND, people, let it not be hid from you,
 What mountaines noyse, and floods proclaime as true ;
 Whenever fame abroad his prayse shall sing,
 All shall observe, and serve this blessed King.

THE whole concluded with an epilogue, which
 the author entitled an

EPIGRAMME.

ILLUSTRIOUS top-bough of heroicke stemme,
 Whose head is crown'd with glories anademe,
 My shallow muse, not daring to draw neare
 Bright Phœbus' burning flames in his career ;
 Yet knowing surely that Apollo shines
 Upon the dunghill, as on golden mines ;
 And knowing this the bounty of best Kings,
 To marke the giver, not the gifted things,
 Doth bouldly venture, in this pompous throng,
 To greet thy greatnesse with a welcome song ;
 And with the pye doth ave Cæsar sing,
 While graver wits doe greater off'rings bring.

No. II.

Woolhampton, 2d February 1762.

SIR,

I RECEIVED your letter : am glad to hear of the success you have met with in your present employment, and wish you a continuance and encrease of it. I have complied with your desire of writing to Lord Sommerville, though I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with his Lordship. Lady Fingall writes this post, and will mention you to Lord and Lady Traquaire, and joins with me in wishing you health and success. I am,

Your obedient servant,
FINGALL,

*John Jackson, Esq; at Mr Love's,
Canongate, Edinburgh.*



No. III.

*Birching-lane, Lombard-street, London,
January 27. 1762.*

MR JACKSON,

SIR,

By the desire of my good friend Mr Withaw, I have writ this post to the Honourable George Drummond, Esq; first commissioner of the customs, and late your Lord Provost of Edinburgh. As he is a gentlemen of one of the first families in your city,
and

and well beloved, I have recommended you to his favour ; and I make no doubt but some of his family will ask when you heard from their friend John Bigsby of Birching-lane, London. Mr Drummond's late wife was a Quaker, of the same denomination as myself, and by that means our friendship came. I have recommended you as a gentleman, and a man of good family and honour, and, I make no doubt, you will keep up that character. I am,

With all due respect,

Thy sincere friend,

JOHN BIGSBY.



MY DEAR FRIEND,

It always gave me great pleasure to hear of your welfare. My late illness prevented my writing to you, as usual ; and as I am satisfied it will not be disagreeable, I take this opportunity from my fire-side, being much better in my health, though, through the channel of Mrs Pont's letter from you to her, and from Mrs Strettle, I have heard you were in health. You are not forgot by many of our best friends in this city, and are often asked after with great good will and pleasure. When I supped last night at Mr Pont's, we remembered all friends in Edinburgh and Germany, and success to the army and fleets. My dear friend, there is a young man come down from London, who has engaged himself with the master of your Theatre for this season :

His

His name is John Jackson: he is a person of good character, a gentleman's son, and has been educated as such, and nothing will do for him but the stage, in which I hope he will succeed; and as your family is large, and I make no doubt but Doctor Drummond and his lady divert themselves sometimes at the house, and sometimes some other gentlemen of your acquaintance and family; if they would be so kind as to take a little notice of him, it would be a great service to him, and make him to be respected among the better sort of people. I well know you will smile, that one under my denomination should recommend one of his calling: it is for the sake of his father, who is a very worthy gentleman, and all his family of good character. I hope, my good friend, you will excuse the freedom I have taken, and I leave the affair to your better judgement, as I know no person that delights in doing good more than yourself. Please to make my compliments to the Doctor and his Lady, and all the rest of your good family. I should be glad to be favoured with a line of your welfare when at leisure. In the interim, I am,

With all due respect,
Thy sincere friend,
JOHN BIGSBY.

*The Honourable
George Drummond, Esq; Edinburgh.*

GEORGE DRUMMOND, Esq; to whom the foregoing letter was addressed, had filled the office of Chief Magistrate of Edinburgh, with dignity and credit to himself, and to the advantage and embellishment of
the

the city. To his exertions the public are indebted for those noble buildings, the Infirmary and the Royal Exchange. The North Bridge, and the New Town, had their origin from his views of improvement, as he did me the honour to point out, in our way from Drummond Lodge to the Cross, through the then disagreeable round-a-bout road, along the narrow lane from Bonnington, through Leith Wynd, and the Nether-bow. He lived to see his favourite plan carried, in part, into effect; and enjoyed in idea, the formation of those streets and squares, we now in reality behold.

PROVOST DRUMMOND's opposition to stage performances appeared to me rather in compliance with his official capacity, and the temper of the times, than from any formed opinion, or settled dislike. His hospitable reception of, and liberal mode of treatment towards the author, then a member of the profession, shewed at least, that the principles of persecution formed no part of his composition.



No. IV.

EXTRACTS from ACTS of PARLIAMENT,
respecting THEATRICAL EXHIBITIONS,
Statute 12th Queen Anne, 10th George II.
February 1. 1736, 10th George III. c. 27.
28th George III. 1788. for which, see
page 300, 301, 303, 304.

No.

No. V.

PROLOGUE spoken by MR LOVE, on MR JACKSON's first Appearance in the Character of *Oroonoko*, at the Theatre in Edinburgh, January 9. 1762.

YE awful critics, who delight to wage
 Eternal war, and lash the harmless stage,
 For three short hours, let dire resentment cease,
 And soft compassion soothe your minds to peace.
 An humble youth to-night, of tender years,
 Rude to the scene, and curb'd with rising fears,
 Implores your aid.—O ! could such goodness flow
 From your kind hearts, his would with rapture glow.

Too soon, alas ! imprudently he finds
 His feeble bark entrusted to the winds ;
 Soft and unseason'd, it contends in vain
 With the rude torrents of the boist'rous main ;
 Nor long can live, unless with piteous hand,
 You'll guide the helm, and steer it safe to land.

This present age one Roscius only knows,
 Who, Pallas-like, in full perfection rose ;
 Aloft he tow'rd, and on the shrine of fame,
 Above the Roman plac'd his British name.
 Our youth attempts not yet such heights to soar ;
 Endure him now ; he hopes to please you more.
 From you this night his sentence he'll receive,
 With lenience then a gentle judgement give.
 Through scenes unknown, uncertainly he strays,
 And treads with tim'rous steps the doubtful ways.
 Void of experience, and of every art,
 Plain simple nature actuates his heart.

Naturc

Strange ! that this Ghost—a female too, and young—
Should have all powers at will—except her tongue :
Were not the age so prone to self-deceiving,
That circumstance alone is past believing.

Ladies, no treaty with such sprites is here;
As are not free of speech, and wont appear ;
We'll prove the story of our phantom true,
And fairly bring him out to public view ;
Nay, make him speak, like any modern blade,
And gossip freely with my lady's maid ;
Nor keep you up all night to see his tricks ;
Ladies—our Ghost begins to walk at six.
His martial music, and a soldier's air,
We hope may recommend him to the fair.
All dread of airy visions then subdue,
Nor start nor tremble if the lights burn blue :
Tho' with a Ghost our comedy is heighten'd,
Ladies—upon my word you shan't be frighten'd.
Ours is a Ghost that's faithful, fond and true,
Made up of flesh and blood, as well as you :
Then every evening come in crouds undaunted,
We never think this house is too much haunted.



PROLOGUE spoken by MR JACKSON, in the character of a *Master Mason*, before the play of the Recruiting Officer,

*By Desire of the Right Honourable the Earl of ELGIN,
Grand Master of the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity
of Free and Accepted Masons, April 17. 1762.*

WHEN the Grand Master, and great Lord of all,
Call'd up from Chaos this terrestrial ball,
He gave the word, and swift o'er eldest night,
Beam'd the first dawning of celestial light.

Confusion

Confusion heard his voice, and murm'ring fled,
 Whilst Order rul'd, and triumph'd in its stead ;
 Discordant atoms, rang'd from pole to pole,
 Forgot to jar, and peace possess'd the whole :
 The fiercest foes in mutual concord strove,
 And all (at once) was harmony and love.

By this example taught, Free Masons join,
 And full in sight, pursue the heav'nly sign.
 With love's firm bands connected, hand in hand,
 On Friendship's solid base, secure we stand,
 While confidence and trust, by turns impress,
 Beam heav'nly influence on each conscious breast.
 No party feuds, no fierce intestine jars,
 No senseless tumults, no pernicious wars,
 Disturb our calm repose, where peace alone,
 In decent order fills the friendly throne.

Can wisdom's self a nobler method find,
 To charm the soul and harmonize mankind,
 Than jests like ours, who labour still to prove
 Unblemish'd truth, firm faith, and mutual love ?
 And ye (unconscious of the heav'nly ray)
 Who smile, perhaps, at what these numbers say,
 Confine the rash reproach, and warn'd, forbear
 To spurn our laws, because some brothers err.
 In nature's fairest products faults arise,
 But shall we thence all harmony despise ?
 Or think creation's beauteous scheme undone,
 Because some specks appear upon the sun ?

No. VII.

EDINBURGH COMPANY,
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR. FOOTE,

1771.

Messrs Foote,
Woodward,
Weston,
Sowdon,
Jackson,
Vendermore,
Lancashire,
Didier,
Gentleman,
Fearon,
Robson,
Miller,
Waker,
Bain,
Knowles,
Vowell,
Farrel,
Dancer,
Maurell,
Collins.

20 Men.

Mrs Baker,
Jackson,
Jewel,
Didier,
Waker,
Fearon,
Farrel,
Collins.

8 Women.

No. VII.

EDINBURGH COMPANY,
 UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR JACKSON,

1790.

Messrs King,
 Pope,
 Wilfon,
 Woods,
 Lamath,
 Mofs,
 Williamfon,
 Archer,
 Taylor,
 Hallion,
 Bell,
 Bland sen.
 Bland jun.
 J. Bland,
 Charteris,
 Charteris jun.
 Sparks,
 Woodroffe,
 Lowe,
 Mapples,
 Bonville,
 Mountfort,
 Jackson.

Mrs Esten,
 Barresford,
 Miss Fontenelle,
 Mrs Taylor,
 W. Wells,
 Sparks,
 Woods,
 Lowe,
 Clark,
 Charteris,
 Archer,
 Mountfort,
 Bland,
 Jackson.

 14 Women.

 23 Men.

No. VIII.

July 8. 1788.

S I R,

If the parts of *Jaffier* and *Pierre* are not differently cast before to-morrow, the play will not be allowed to go on. It is unpardonable in a manager to thrust a fellow into a part which he must be sensible he is totally incapable of performing.

THE PUBLIC,

Mr Jackson, Theatre Royal.

No. IX.

Already inserted, No. VIII. as above,



No. X.

Edinburgh, 15th July 1788.

S I R,

WE are of opinion, that Mr Fennell's late deportment to the public, and your conduct as manager, with regard to that matter, require a very ample apology from both, testifying your deep regret for having failed in the respect due to them: and that if Mr Fennell refuses to make such an apology, you ought immediately to dismiss him: and we take this method of intimating to you, that if this opinion is not complied with, by making the apology
 fug.

(Signed) HENRY ERSKINE,
And by 162 other Advocates and Writers.



February 19. 1789.

I AM ready to attest, that Mrs Macrae's name was inserted in the box-book of the Theatre, by the manager's order, for the balcony, on Monday, July 14. 1788, at seven o'clock in the morning by me; and that the name continued in the plan of the house the whole day unaltered, and so continues at this moment: and I likewise declare, that the whole of the lower boxes were filled up at the same hour, with the names of those ladies who were to possess them that evening.

JOHN GIBB.



I HEREBY declare, that I received an order from the manager, at eight o'clock in the morning, on Monday, July 14. 1788. to inform Mrs Macrae, that her name was inserted in the box-book for the balcony that evening.

WILLIAM SUTHERLAND.

No. XII.

MEMORIAL for the Creditors of **JOHN JACKSON**, at their Meeting held on the 3d day of September.

MR PLAYFAIR, for himself, and the other trustee, stated to the meeting, that, in consequence of the resolution of the last general meeting, the trustees had immediately inserted advertisements in the Edinburgh and London newspapers, bearing, that the Edinburgh and Glasgow Theatres were to be let by private bargain *.

THAT, previous to these advertisements, offers had been made for a lease of the Theatres, at a very respectable rent, from two different quarters: That, antecedent also to these advertisements, and previous to the last meeting, he, in order to know the intentions of Mr Kemble, the present lessee, did, in a conversation with him, offer to give him a lease for another year, or even for two, at the present rent, which Mr Kemble declined.

THAT Mr Playfair, about the time of the last meeting, discovered, that Mr Kemble had formed a resolution to use every means in his power, to prevent offerers from coming forward for the Theatres, and by that means, to get them for himself, at the low rent

* The meeting was held 21st July, and the Theatres were advertised 24th July.

rent of L.500 Sterling. That, with this view, paragraphs were inserted in the London newspapers, and industriously circulated, importing that Mr Kemble had got a perpetual right to half the property, and to the sole management, by a decision of the Dean of Faculty; particularly, a paragraph to this effect, which appeared in the Star, and other London papers, at the very time that the Theatres were advertised here *.

ALTHOUGH no decision of the Dean of Faculty, in a private dispute between Mr Jackson and Mr Kemble, could affect the rights and interests of the creditors, or of the gentlemen who stood forward as sureties for the composition payable to them; yet it became necessary to counteract and disappoint the effects of these reports, otherwise there would have remained no competitors to bid for the Theatres, and Mr Kemble would have got the lease at any rent he thought proper.

It was impossible to obviate these difficulties, without an interview with the persons who were to take the lease. With that view, Mr Playfair went to London, and after some negotiation, concluded an agreement with Mrs Estlin†, containing a provision, that the consent of the holders of the patent, or permission to act under it, should be procured, agreeable to the minutes of the meeting. In order to obtain this, applications have been made to the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas. The Duke
d has

* See No. XV.

† 10th August 1792.

has given his consent, but Mr Dundas has not yet returned any answer*.

IN Mr Playfair's absence, Mr James Gibson, as agent for Mr Kemble, wrote a letter to Mr King, the other trustee, offering a rent of L. 500 Sterling for the Theatres, or such other rent as should be fixed upon by the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas. The letter is here referred to †. Also the answer by Mr Playfair on his return ‡. This letter contains conclusive evidence of the plan which Mr Kemble had laid down, of obtaining the Theatres at an under-value, and that he and his advisers considered, that the influence of the holders of the patent might be used as an instrument to compel the creditors to come into that measure.

THE trustees have too high an opinion of the honour and candour of the Noble Duke, and the Right Honourable Gentleman, in whose names the patent is held, to suppose that they could lend their influence to a measure so obviously unjust, and which would so effectually injure the private rights and property of every individual connected with the Theatre. Besides, that every property is fairly worth to its proprietor, what it will bring in the public market, it is easy to show, that the rent proposed is altogether inadequate for the two Theatres; and that the attempt made by Mr Kemble, to compel the creditors to give it at that rent, is therefore highly unjust,

TWENTY years ago, the Theatre of Edinburgh alone was let for five hundred guineas a-year, when it

* His answer has since been received, see No. XXIII.

† See No. XIII.

‡ No. XIV.

it had neither scenery nor decorations to half its present value. As the town is increased, and of course, the demand for theatrical amusements, a higher rent may now be given than twenty years ago, other matters remaining on an equal footing. Besides that, surely the Glasgow Theatre, which cost Mr Jackson more than L. 2000 Sterling, is worth some rent.

MR JACKSON can easily instruct, that the Theatre, as it now stands, has cost him not less than L. 7000 Sterling; that to keep the fabric, the scenery, wardrobe, &c. in proper repair, cost him hitherto, annually, not less than L. 300 Sterling; and as these must be still kept in repair, it is submitted, that a rent of L. 1000 Sterling is nothing more than an adequate recompense for the sums laid out; and that the idea of its being an unreasonable burden imposed upon the public amusements of the city, is without foundation. The trustees are confident, that if these facts are stated to the holders of the patent, they will not refuse their consent. It is therefore proposed, that this meeting shall approve of the transaction made by Mr Playfair with Mrs Esten, and appoint the same to be carried into effect; and also authorise the trustees to state the facts above mentioned in a memorial to the holders of the patent.

It was further stated, that since the business of letting the Theatres to Mrs Esten became public, the supporters of Mr Kemble had, by paragraphs in the newspapers, and otherwise, attempted to call in question her right to the lease, as well as that of the creditors to grant it. How far a conspiracy of this sort might deserve public prosecution and punishment,

might be a matter for future deliberation. At present, it was submitted, that the creditors ought, in justice to themselves, to authorise an advertisement to be put into the London and Edinburgh newspapers, by their authority, expressive of the circumstances and facts of their having let the Theatres as before recited.



No. XIII.

Edinburgh, 10th August 1792.

SIR,

ON the part of Mr Stephen Kemble, manager of the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, I hereby make offer to you, as one of the trustees on the estate of Mr John Jackson, of the sum of five hundred pounds Sterling, for a lease for one year, from the 2d day of November next, of the Theatres of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Mr Kemble will, besides the above sum, pay the whole public burdens due from both Theatres.

OR Mr Kemble will pay such rent as shall be fixed by his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, and the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, the patentees. He will find unexceptionable security for performance of his engagements ; and if the trustees chuse it, he will extend the lease to such longer period of time as they shall settle with him. I am,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,
JAMES GIBSON.

Mr John King, accomptant in Edinburgh.

No.

No. XIV.

SIR,

YOUR letter, addressed to Mr King, dated the 10th of August 1792, was sent by him to me this day, containing an offer of L. 500.

THE offer is altogether inadequate, and at whatever period it had been made, it would not have been accepted. It is now, however, too late, as I have agreed provisionally to let the Theatre for L. 1000 to Mrs Estlin, in consequence of the powers from the last meeting of creditors.

FOR your delay in not offering, you can only blame yourself; as I told you in Princes-street, a day or two after the Theatres were advertised, that I had offers, which would be accepted of, if Mr Kemble did not come forward in time.

As to the offer being in any respect adequate, your knowledge in the business, when acting for the former trustee, must satisfy you to the contrary.

LAST year, you did not hesitate to declare, that you would shut up the Theatre, rather than take such a rent, or allow any persons whatever to control the rent. What reason there is for altering your opinion so completely this year, you can best explain.

As to a reference of the rent to the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas, had you made such a proposal at the meeting of creditors, you would have known their sentiments. Although I entertain a very great respect for the Noble Duke and
Mr

Mr Dundas, I should doubt how far a reference would be a proper mode of disposing of the property of creditors ; and I am confident, that neither of them would incline to enter into such a business. I am, &c.

ROBERT PLAYFAIR.



No. XV.

EDINBURGH THEATRICALS.

THE contest for manager of this Theatre is at last ended. On Wednesday the 18th instant, the Dean of Faculty settled it thus : That Mr Kemble, who this year rents the Theatres of the creditors of Mr Jackson, the late manager, at the enormous rent of L. 1360, is to pay Mr Jackson half the profits arising this season ; and every other season after, Mr Kemble is to be proprietor with Jackson, and sole manager, for which he is to be allowed a salary out of the profits ; and that salary to be hereafter appointed by the Dean of Faculty.

AT first sight, it may appear not equitable, that Mr Kemble should give Jackson half the profits of this year, after hazarding so large a sum for the rent. It is thus explained : Subsequent to Mr Kemble's taking the Theatre, he made Jackson a voluntary offer of half the concern, provided Jackson found security for his part of the rent. This Jackson accepted, but did not produce that security which

which Kemble approved. This matter was left to the decision of the Dean of Faculty, which he determined as above*.

THE season has been so successful, as to yield considerable profits : So, though Kemble gives up the half of these profits, he has got in return half of the property, while Jackson has any concern in it. This speculation, therefore, has been ultimately good.

JACKSON has too long suppressed the public entertainment. The whole of his conduct has appeared inexplicable, though he has held the Theatres for eleven years.

ARGUS, 28th July 1792.



TO THE PUBLIC.

LONDON.

KEMBLE writes, that he is safe in the *Edinburgh* Theatre—that the *Dean of Faculty* assures him no other Person shall have the House; and if any Company should open *another*, he will commit them to prison for *sturdy vagrants* and *vagabonds*.—They who

• The decret-arbitral was not issued till August 9th, but the purport of it was thus anticipated in the above advertisement, which was inserted by an intimate of Mr Kemble's, who confessed that he did it *to prevent bidders*, of which I shall produce proof when required.

who therefore engage here, will do well to consider this *threat*.

PUBLIC LEDGER,

Aug. 28. 1792.

There were a variety of other advertisements in the different papers in London, to the same purport, the contents of which were MALICIOUS, SCANDALOUS, and FALSE,



No. XVI.

ADMONITION and EXHORTATION by
the REVEREND PRESBYTERY of EDIN-
BURGH, to all within their Bounds, dated,
Edinburgh, January 5. 1757.

THE Presbytery taking into their serious consideration the declining state of religion, the open profanation of the Lord's day, the contempt of public worship, the growing luxury and levity of the present age, in which so many seem lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God ; and being particularly affected with the *unprecedented countenance* given of late to the play-house in this place, when the state of the nation, and the circumstances of the poor, make such hurtful entertainments still more pernicious ; judge it their indispensable duty to express, in the most open and solemn manner, the deep concern they feel on this occasion.

THE

THE opinion which the Christian church has always entertained of stage plays and players, as prejudicial to the interests of religion and morality, is well known ; and the fatal influence which they commonly have on the far greater part of mankind, particularly the younger sort, is too obvious to be called in question.

To enumerate how many servants, apprentices, and students in different branches of literature, in this city and suburbs, have been seduced from their proper business, by attending the stage, would be a painful and disagreeable task.

THE Presbytery, in the year 1727, when consisting of many pious, prudent, and learned ministers, whose praise is in all the churches, being aware of these evils, did prepare a paper, which was read from the several pulpits within their bounds, warning their people against the dangerous infection of the Theatre, then erected there.

IN the year 1737, the legislature in their great wisdom, did, by an act of the 10th of George II. enact and declare, " that any person who should for hire or reward, act, or cause to be acted, any play or other entertainment of the stage, without the special licence and authority mentioned in the said act, should be deemed a rogue and a vagabond ; and for every such offence, should forfeit the sum of L. 50 sterling."

AT that time a project was set on foot to obtain a licenced Theatre in this city ; but the masters and professors of the university, supported by the magistrates, having prepared a petition, setting forth the dangerous tendency of a playhouse here, with re-

c

spect

spect to the important interests of virtue and learning, the project was laid aside.

THE players, however, being so audacious as to continue to act in defiance of the law, the Presbytery did, at their own charge, prosecute them before the court of session, and prevailed in the process : The players were fined in terms of law, and warrants being issued for apprehending them, they fled from justice. But others came in their place ; who since that time have attempted to elude the law, by changing the name of the *Playhouse* into that of the *Concert-hall*.

As such a slight evasion, the mere change of a name, could not make the smallest variation in the nature of the thing, the Presbytery continued to do all in their power, and in their sphere, to prevent the growing evil ; and think themselves at this time loudly called upon in *one body*, and with *one voice*, to expostulate, in the bowels of love and compassion, with all under their care and inspection.

WHEN our gracious Sovereign, attentive to the voice of providence, is calling from the throne to humiliation and prayer, how unseemly is it for his subjects to give themselves up to mirth and jollity ! when the war in which we are engaged, and many awful tokens of the divine displeasure, bespeak, as in the language of an inspired writer, *to redeem the time, because the days are evil* ; should that time be squandered away in running the constant ground of foolish, not to say sinful amusements ? When the wants and cries of the numerous poor require extraordinary supplies, how unaccountable is it to lavish away vast sums for such vain and idle purposes !

purposes ! When the wisdom of the nation has guided the inhabitants of this city and suburbs from the infection of the stage, by a plain and express statute, is it not a high instance of folly to break down that barrier, and open a door with their own hands for theatrical representations ? which are in many respects no less inconsistent with good policy, than unfriendly to religion ; and will be found sooner or later to affect their temporal as well as spiritual interests.

ON these accounts, and for many other obvious and weighty considerations, the Presbytery, warmed with just concern for the good of souls, do, in the fear of God, warn, exhort, and obtest, all within their bounds, as they regard the glory of God, the credit of our holy religion, and their own welfare, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, by shewing a sacred regard for the Lord's day, and all the ordinances of divine institution ; and by discouraging in their respective spheres, the illegal and dangerous entertainments of the stage.

THE Presbytery would plead with all in authority, with teachers of youth, parents and masters of families, to restrain, by every habile method, such as are under their influence, from frequenting those seminaries of folly and vice. They would particularly beseech the younger part of their flocks, to beware, lest, by example, or from a foolish desire of appearing in the fashionable world, they be misled into such pernicious snares ; snares which must necessarily retard, if not entirely mar that progress in the respective parts of their education, on which their future usefulness and success depend. And

lastly, they would entreat and obtest persons of all ranks and conditions, that instead of contributing to the growing licentiousness of the age, they may distinguish themselves by shining as lights in the world, being blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, occupying, for the great purposes of the honour of God, and the good of mankind, that time, that substance, and those other talents, which they have received from their Lord and Master.

On the whole, the Presbytery, in the most earnest manner, call upon all who have the interest of religion at heart, to plead fervently at the throne of grace, in the prevailing name of the great Mediator, *untill the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest ; then judgement shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field ; and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, greatness and assurance for ever.*

THE Presbytery appoint this *admonition* and *exhortation* to be read from all the pulpits within their bounds, on the last Sabbath, being the thirtieth day of this month, immediately after divine service before noon.

No.

No. XVII.

RESOLUTIONS of the PRESBYTERY of GLASGOW, respecting the representation of the Tragedy of *Douglas*, as inserted in the public prints, *February 2. 1757.*

THE Presbytery having seen a printed paper, intituled, “ *An Admonition and Exhortation of the Reverend Presbytery of Edinburgh,*” which, among other evils bewailing, laments the extraordinary and unprecedented countenance given of late to the play-house in that city; and having good reason to believe, that this refers to the following melancholy, but notour facts, that one who is a minister of the church of Scotland, did himself write and compose a stage-play, intituled the *tragedy of Douglas*, and got it to be acted in the Theatre at Edinburgh; and that he, with several other ministers of this church, were present, and some of them oftner than once, at the acting of the said play, before a numerous audience; the Presbytery, deeply affected with this new and strange appearance, do think it their duty to declare, as they hereby do, that they agree with the Presbytery of Edinburgh, in the sentiments published by them with respect to stage-plays; and particularly that such entertainments, from what has usually been exhibited in them, and also from the dissolute lives (for most part) and infamous characters of the players, have been looked upon, by the Christian church, in all ages, and of all different communions, as extremely

tremely prejudicial to religion and morality, as well as hurtful to the other valuable interests of human society, by the wasteful expence of money and time they have occasioned ; and being convinced by long experience, a sure test of the tendency of any action or practice, how vain it is to expect such a reformation of the stage, as inconsistent with the ends aforesaid ; and therefore such entertainments should be discouraged and laid aside. And the Presbytery, farther considering that the unprecedented countenance given the play-house, in the instance mentioned, is greatly aggravated by a late act of parliament, rendering the stage (because not licenced) unlawful in Scotland ; and also from the present circumstances of the nation with regard to the war we are engaged in, the dearth of provisions, and the awful tokens of the anger of just heaven against us ; they therefore hereby appoint and intrust such of their members as shall represent them in the ensuing General Assembly of this Church, to move and insist, in a regular manner, that the venerable assembly do declare, by a public act, their judgment, and that of this national church, against the entertainments of the theatre, as of very hurtful tendency to the interests of religion and society. *Secondly*, That the assembly do strictly enquire if the facts above mentioned, *viz.* that a minister of this church has composed and procured to be acted, on the theatre in the Canongate of Edinburgh, the tragedy called *Douglas* ; and that the representation of the said tragedy was attended by him and several other ministers, having been under the consideration of the Presbyteries respectively concerned ; and whether their ministers, being found guilty,

ty, have been censured as their faults deserved; and to give such directions, as they in their wisdoms shall find necessary, that such ministers, and all others, may be sensible, that the church of Scotland will never protect her members in a practice so unbecoming their character, and of such pernicious tendency to the great interests of religion, industry, and virtue. And, *lastly*, That the assembly would use their best endeavours to obtain such an explication and enforcement of the act of the 17th George the II. anent the play-house, as it may not be liable to the pitiful evasions by which it is now eluded.



No. XVIII.

LETTER, JOHN SETON, Esq; to WALTER
ROSS, Esq; original produced.

London, 27th July 1786.

DEAR SIR,

MR DUNDAS left this country for a better, I mean Scotland, last week. He did not choose to sign the letter to Lord Salisbury, hereto annexed, by himself, but was to see Duke Hamilton at Edinburgh races, when they were both to sign and send it to me ; but in case the confusion incident to such meetings should put this business out of head, I think you should put Mr Dundas in remembrance. As soon as I have it, and no sooner, can I apply at the Chamberlain's office for the patent. Mr Dundas had some delicacy in applying for

for a patent for a Playhouse, without explaining the reason, and without a colleague ; and the annexed letter is wrote to remove his objection. Yours, &c.

(Signed) J. SETON.

Walter Ross, Esq; Edinburgh.



No. XIX. 2

DRAUGHT of a LETTER subjoined to the foregoing.

MY LORD,

In order to put an end to disputes which have arisen relative to the renewal of the patent for the Edinburgh Theatre, now near expiring, we have been requested to apply for the same in our joint

names, as trustees for the ^{parties concerned} public; and Mr John Jackson the present patentee having consented thereto, we are to request your Lordship humbly to move his Majesty for a renewal of the said patent in our joint names, for twenty-one years, from and after the expiration of the present term.

The Right Honourable the Earl of Salisbury.

N. B. Another copy of this draught, with the words *parties concerned*, interlined by Mr Dundas's own hand, is in Mr Seton's office.

No.

No. XX.

ANSWER, WALTER ROSS, Esq; to JOHN SETON, Esq; Copy produced.

Edinburgh, 8th August 1786.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter was sent to me by Mr Dundas, signed ; but it contains three very wrong words, " Trustee *for the public.*" We have all along denied that the public had any right. That is the very dispute, the point we have fought, and therefore the expression is radically wrong.

THE public never requested his Grace of Hamilton or Mr Dundas to do any thing in the matter. It was Mr Jackson and I who made the request, because we would not consent to shorten the patent a single day. We might have had it ourselves ; and you know the terms well. How then could you conceive we were at one stroke to give it to the public ; or, which is the same thing, to *trustees for the public.* I have therefore altered these words, and put in their place, *all concerned.* This preserves the right of all parties as they stand at this moment. I have apprised Mr Dundas of the alteration ; and, as soon as I can, shall transmit you the letter. My best and kindest compliments to Mrs Seton. I am sorry she does not accompany you here. I am, &c.

John Seton, Esq; Golden Square.

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No.

No. XXI.

LETTER, JOHN SETON, Esq; to JOHN JACKSON, Esq; Original produced*.

Golden Square, 16th August 1786.

SIR,

I DULY received your letter of the 8th instant, inclosing one signed by his Grace the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas, relative to the renewal of the patent for the Edinburgh Theatre, to which business I shall pay all the attention in my power ; and should I want any assistance, I will let you know. It will be necessary, in the mean time, that you remit L. 100 to pay the fees, as soon as you conveniently can. Remember me to Mr Ross ; and believe me,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) JOHN SETON.

John Jackson, Esq; Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

* The above letters, No. XVIII. XIX. XX. and XXI. refer to Sect. VIII. p. 138.

No. XXII.

JOHN JACKSON, Esq; for the Expence of soliciting and obtaining his Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, licencing his Grace Douglas Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, and the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, Treasurer of the Navy, and their Assigns, to establish a Theatre in the City of Edinburgh.

1788. Fees paid at the Lord Chamberlain's office for warrant, with two names, stamps, passing and entering, -	L. 20	4	0
Gratuity to Mr Ely, first clerk, -	10	10	0
Ditto to messenger, -	1	1	0
	<hr/>		
	31	15	0
Attorney General's, for the bill and stamps, -	12	5	0
Secretary of State's office, for the bill and two names, -	9	1	0
Signet-office fees, stamps, &c. -	13	7	0
Privy-Seal office fees, stamps, &c. -	13	7	0
Great-Seal fees, stamps, &c. -	35	4	6
	<hr/>		
Carried over, —	L. 114	19	6
f 2			

Brought over,	—	L. 114	19	6
Coach-hire, postages, messengers, and small gratuities,	- - -	2	2	0
Solicitor's fee;—for drawing the application to his Majesty, and fair copies:—for copies of the original patent, and assignments thereof;—for repeated attendances on Mr Dundas, Mr Ross, and Mr Jackson;—for following and passing the patent through the different offices;—for correspondence, and all other writings and attendances, for near two years not charged above,	- - -	26	5	0
		<hr/>		
		L. 143	6	6

Jan. 14. By Forbes and Company on Moffat and Company,	L.100	0	0
May 27. Paid Mr Jack- son,	20	0	0

No.

No. XXIII.

Melvill-castle, November 22. 1792.

MADAM,

MR DUNDAS desires me to acquaint you, in answer to the message I delivered to him from you, that it is not his intention at all to interfere in the dispute between Mrs Estlin and Mr Kemble. I am,

Madam, Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) ROBERT HEPBURN.



No. XXIV.

**LETTER from Mr PLAYFAIR to Mr GIBSON,
Agent for Mr Kemble.**

17th February 1793.

S I R,

IN your papers, given into Court for Mr Kemble, you mention that the Duke of Hamilton's consent to Mrs Estlin was only a day prior to that given by Mr Dundas to Mr Kemble. I understand that several months before, you wrote to the Duke of Hamilton, requesting his consent to Mr Kemble's performance under the patent; to which his Grace answered, That he had already given his consent to Mrs Estlin. I am to request that you will lodge in process a copy of your letter, and of the Duke's answer. I am, Sir,

Yours most obedient servant,

(Signed) ROBERT PLAYFAIR.

No.

No. XXV.

LETTER from his Grace the Duke of HAMILTON to Mr GIBSON, produced in consequence of the request in the preceeding Letter.

Leeming Lane, September 8. 1792.

S I R,

HAVING considered with attention the state of facts relative to the Edinburgh Theatre, I think, that notwithstanding the very high opinion I entertain of Mr Henry Erskine the Dean of Faculty, yet I cannot conceive that Mr Jackson's trustees, or his creditors, can be restrained by Mr Jackson's missive, referred to in the decret-arbitral, from entering into an agreement for the lease of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Theatres, to any other person than Mr Kemble.

I HAVE been informed, that previous to the decret, a treaty had been depending between Mr Jackson's trustees and creditors, and Mrs Esten, for a lease of those Theatres, from the second day of November next; and an agreement to that effect was actually executed in London, at or about the date of the decret: *I therefore, as one of the patentees, cannot reasonably with-hold the benefit of the patent from Mrs Esten.* I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) HAMILTON & BRANDON.

James Gibson, Esq;

F I N I S.

* * *There are a few typographical errors in the following sheets, which, as they affect not the sense, are referred to the reader's correction. The three following, as applying to facts, with one reference to the Appendix, are necessarily pointed out :*

Page 26. *for* twenty-four *read* twenty miles.

Page 74. *for* Mrs *read* Mr Thomson.

Page 113. In the notes, *for* 1781 *read* 1782.

Page 298. *for* No. XI. *read* No. XII.

In page 28. to Inigo Jones, the appellation of *Sir* was unintentionally prefixed : on enquiry we cannot find that Inigo Jones was ever regularly knighted, though we have the following authority that he was sometimes so styled :

One of Howell's letters to Ben Johnson runs thus :

" I heard you was censured lately at court, that you have lighted too foul upon *Sir Inigo*, and that you write with a porcupine's quill dipped in too much gall. Excuse me, that I am so free with you ; it is because I am in no common way of friendship.

Yours, J. H."

May 3. 1635.

Howell's letters, vol. I. § 6. No. 20. edit. 1650. Biographia Britannica, v. IV. p. 2773.

9/2

